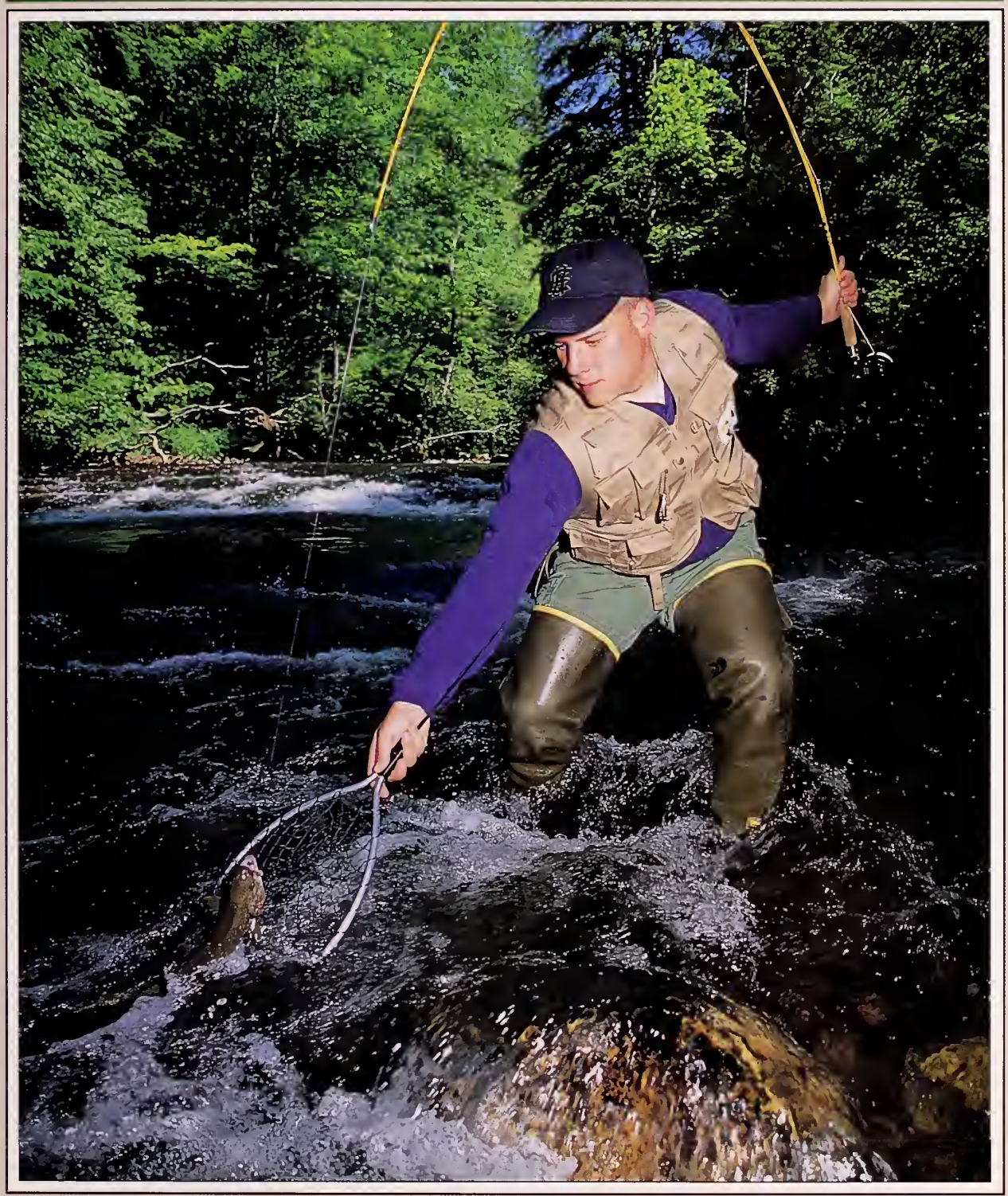
VIRGINIA WILDLIFE

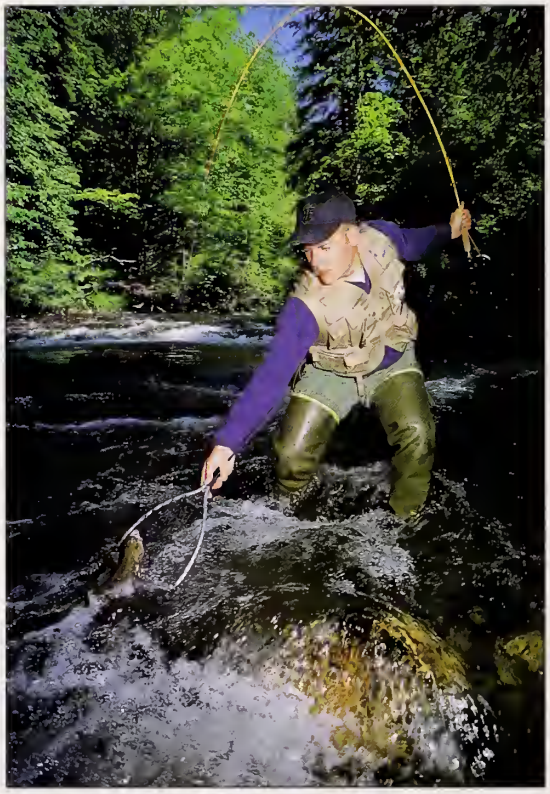
MARCH 1995 ONE DOLLAR



1995 Trout Guide Inside

Wild turkeys like to keep their family secrets, but with the help of radio transmitters, we're tuning into their personal lives. See page 3 for details; photo by Dwight Dyke.

VIRGINIA WILDLIFE



Dwight Dyke

Cover: Trout season opens on March 18. Don't be left out! Turn to page 8 for details on the season; photo by Dwight Dyke.
Back cover: Wild turkey poult; photo by Lloyd B. Hill.

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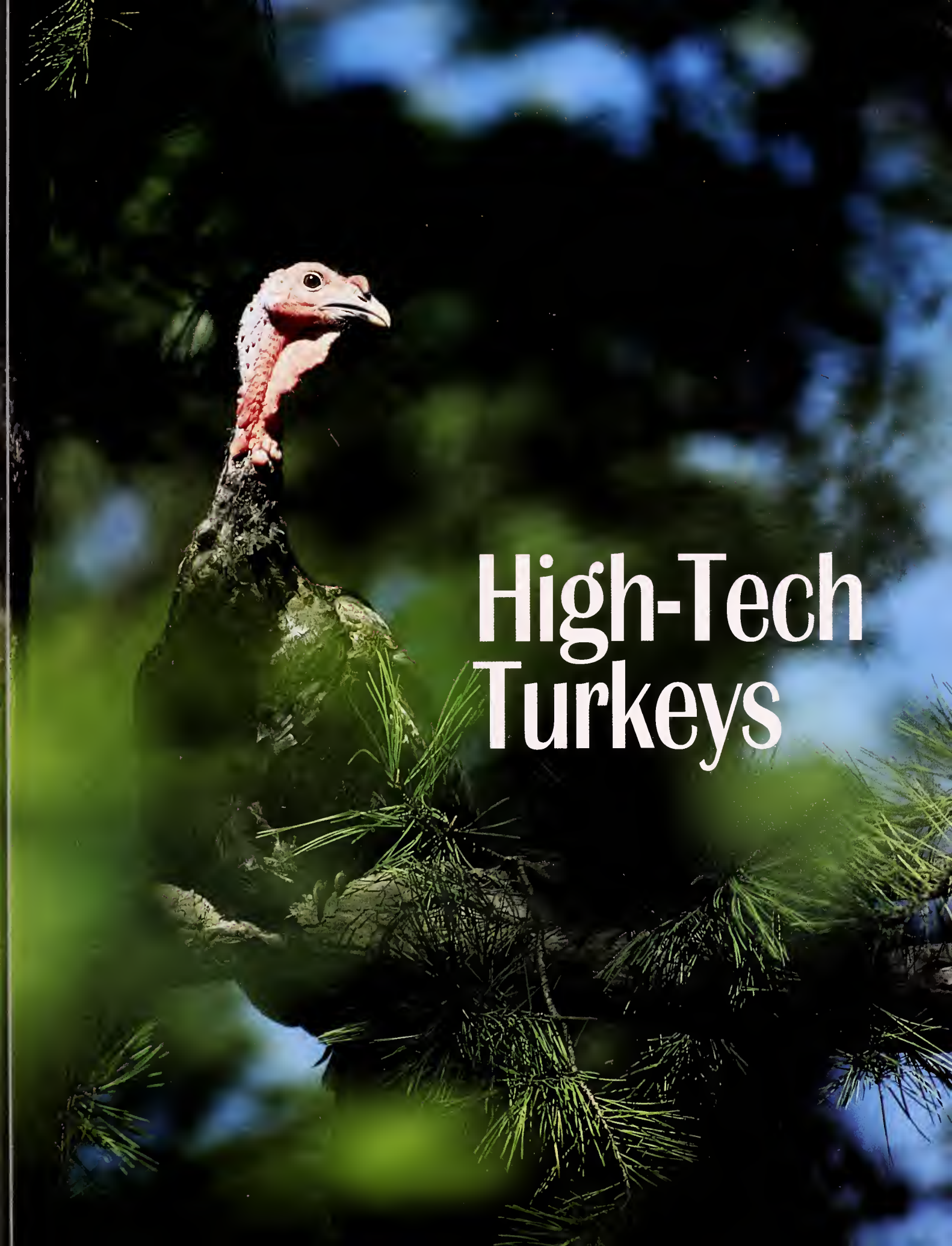
Lloyd Hill

Dedicated to the Conservation of Virginia's Wildlife and Natural Resources



High-Tech Turkeys

Dwight Dyke

by Gary Norman

How do we decipher the secrets of wild turkeys in Virginia? We follow the beeps.

The search had covered over 200 square miles, and the pilot and biologist were about to abandon their efforts. As the plane banked hard to the left for the return flight, they heard it. "There, yeah, it's weak, but that's her signal. I'm getting it from left antennae. We need to head southwest."

The signal was coming from a small transmitter harnessed to the back of a wild turkey. Acorns and other foods were scarce and this hen had moved nearly 30 air miles from where she was captured and fitted with the radio-telemetry equipment. The pilot and biologist were Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries staff working on a five-year project investigating the population dynamics of wild turkeys in Virginia's western mountains.

Conservation efforts to restore wild turkey populations in Virginia where they were extirpated in the early part of the century have been highly successful. Restoration of populations in southwest and eastern Virginia has been accomplished with wild-trapped birds from long-established populations in the western mountains. In fact, restored eastern and southwestern populations have out-performed the area from which they originated and today have higher densities and growth rates. Concern over low densities and lower growth rates of wild turkeys in our western mountains led to this study.

We undertook the study to learn what factors are limiting the population growth of wild turkeys in the western mountains. In order to get the bottom line, we needed information about losses (deaths) in the population and their cause, as well as in-

formation about population gains (births).

Our study design was ambitious but necessary to be confident of our findings. We needed to follow a large number of animals over a long period of time to cover the range of environmental (food and weather) extremes. Our goal was to determine the survival and productivity of 100 hens per year for the 5-year study.

In order to determine the fate of individual birds in the study, we attached a small transmitter to the hens we captured in the fall and winter using rocket-propelled nets. The transmitters allowed us to remotely track the bird movements with a signal receiver and antennae. By triangulating on the signal, we could determine the animals' approximate location. In addition, the radios were equipped with motion sensors which served to indicate whether a hen was alive or dead.

The range we could track the birds on the ground varied with the terrain. Under ideal conditions a signal could be heard for several miles on the ground, but generally was less than one mile. When a signal could not be found from the ground, we searched with the Department's plane equipped with a receiver and an antennae mounted under each wing. From the air a signal could be heard at greater distances, ranging up to 20 miles.

The study was conducted over a large area ranging from Shenandoah to Wythe Counties. During the study, dating from 1989-90 to 1993-94, we captured 678 turkeys. Leg bands were attached to males and they were released at the capture site. We attached 427 radio transmitters to females that were also released at the capture site.

We tracked the hens at least once a week to monitor their survival. We checked them more frequently, twice a week, during the spring to determine if and how long they nested. Because incubating hens leave their nest during the day for food and water, we tracked after nightfall. We considered hens to be incubating if we found them in the same location from night to night.

About 3-4 weeks after a hen left her nest, we checked to see how many poults were alive. From other studies, we knew that the first two weeks are critical to the survival of young poults, and that most of the poult mortality occurs at this time. To get close enough to get an accurate count of the poults, we used tape-recorded calls of lost poults. Hens generally responded to the calls with yelping and eventually brought her brood within sight of the camouflaged biologist operating the tape-player.

Although the analyses of this project are still in progress, some interesting preliminary findings are available. Perhaps the most important information we have gained is about survival. Survival of hens varied considerably by year and appears to be related to mast crops. In years with good mast crops, hens tended to have smaller home ranges, generally were found in forested areas, and had higher survival rates. In years with poor mast crops, they ranged over larger areas and spent more time in and around fields and clearings, facts which may help explain why they were more vulnerable to predation or harvest during those years.

Hens generally ranged over a 2-5 square miles area, but occasionally moved great distances, probably in search of food. One hen we trapped in Augusta County seemed to be almost migratory. She would move between a fall and winter range on the east slope of Shenandoah Mountain to a spring and summer range about 20 miles northwest across the mountain on a farm in Highland County. The greatest distance a hen moved in the study was approximately 47 miles.

Weather apparently was not a significant factor affecting survival rates. During the extensive snow storms that occurred during the

Dwight Dyke

Dwight Dyke

Before you can tag wild turkeys with a transmitter, you must get your hands on them first, and that is not as easy as it sounds. First, a net must be laid, camouflaged and covered with bait for several days to weeks to trick wary turkeys into the trap. Then, a blind is set up where an observer waits hidden from view to trigger the "rockets" which will throw the net over the feeding turkeys.

Dwight Dyke

Wild turkeys are gently untangled from nets and hens are tagged with a small radio transmitter to track their movements as they nest and raise their young.

study, we found few instances where we felt weather caused direct mortality. Hens tended to weather the storms by roosting or restricting their movements to small areas.

Predators were responsible for the greatest single source of mortality. We carefully examined and x-rayed the carcasses of birds that were killed for clues about the cause of death. Sometimes it was relatively easy to tell what the predator was, other times it was not possible.

Mammalian predators, principally fox and bobcat, took most of the birds, although some were killed by avian predators. Kenny Sexton, a biologist assistant working on the project, determined that a bobcat had killed one of the birds when he tracked the transmitter to a bobcat den. Kenny never recovered the transmitter or the turkey from the rock outcropping where the bobcat had taken its kill.

The effect of legal hunting on the population also varied by year. In years with good mast crops, hunters took a small percentage of the birds. In other years, losses to legal hunting were much greater. Hunters that harvested leg-banded gobblers or radio-equipped hens were given small cash rewards for the information they provided. Most of these successful hunters were anxious to learn when and where their bird had been trapped.

Dwight Dyke

Information on the effects of fall hunting on the turkey population from this project will aid the Department in its future management decisions about our fall hunting seasons. Preliminary population modelling indicates that fall hunting is an added source of mortality and that lower harvest rates could stimulate growth in the turkey population.

Perhaps most discouraging was the information we gained about illegal killing of wild turkey hens. Like legal hunting, the severity of illegal hunting was greatest during years of mast failures. Poaching was most significant prior to the opening of the fall hunting season, but occurred throughout the year. Poachers responded differently when they found they had killed one of the radio-tagged birds. Some apparently dropped the bird where they killed it and probably ran. Others tried to hide the radio under rocks, stumps, etc., or drown the signal in ponds and streams. One arrest was made when two transmitters were recovered at a residence.

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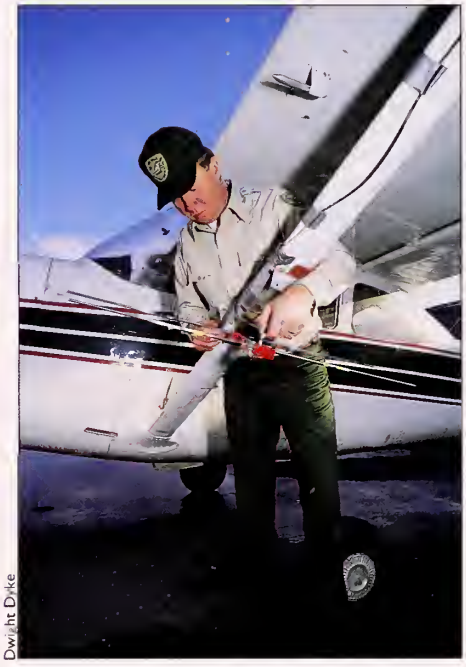


Dwight Dyke

W. Gregory Brown

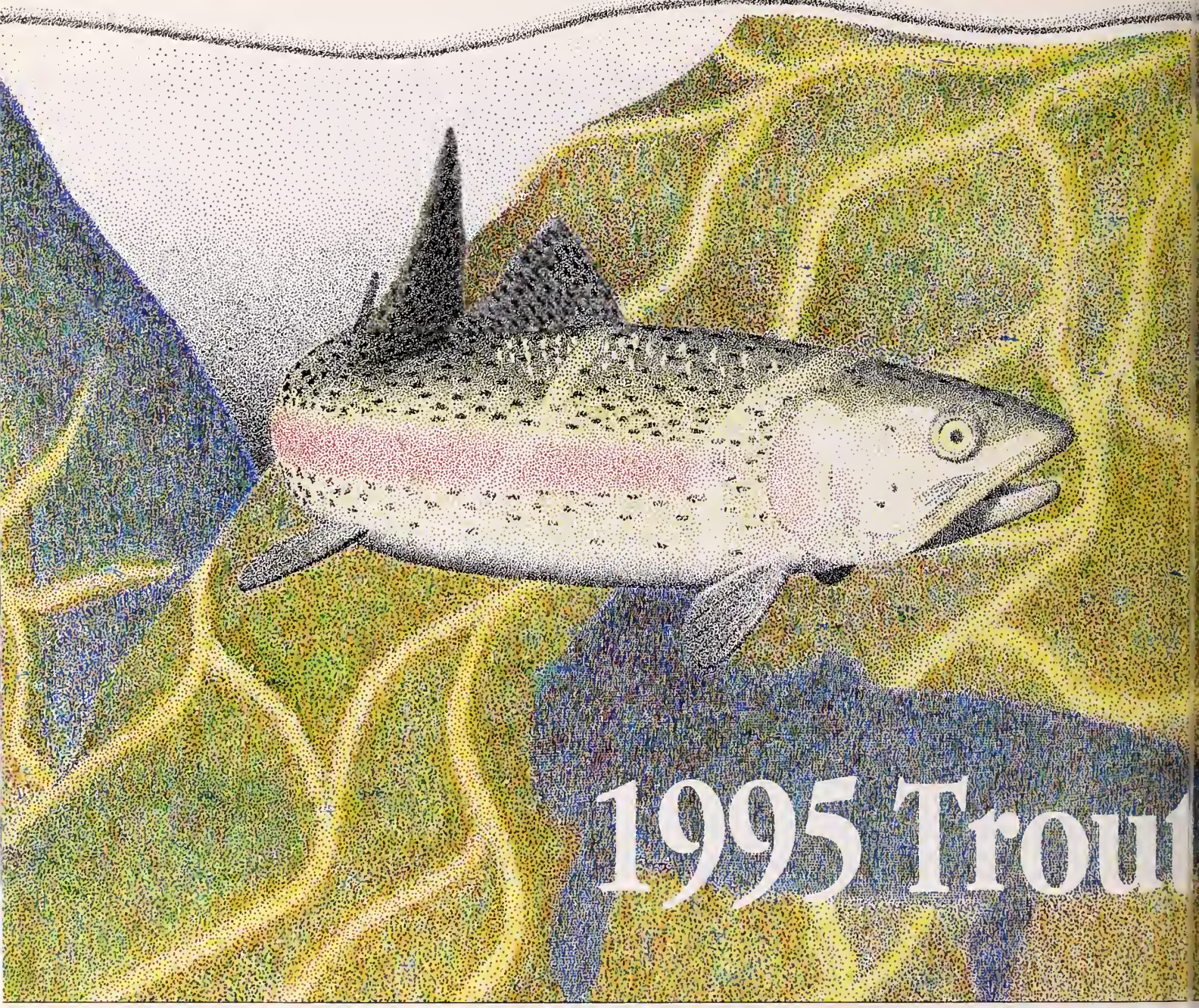
VDGIF wildlife biologists attached radio transmitters to 427 hen turkeys from 1989-90 and 1993-94. The hens were tracked at least once a week to monitor their survival and the progress of their young. Under ideal conditions, a signal could be heard for several miles on the ground, but often a plane was used with a receiver and antennae mounted under each wing to hear the signals at distances up to 20 miles.

The information we gained about nesting and productivity of the radioed hens was also enlightening. Wild turkey biologists and enthusiasts are aware that turkeys lay a large number of eggs (usually 9-11) and, as such, have a tremendous reproductive potential. Our study shows however, that production in the wild is but a fraction of their potential. We found that while most hens attempt to lay eggs, only about 33% will be successful raising a brood. A lot can happen during the 28 days a hen incubates her nest. Weather, predators, and other factors take their toll on the young turkeys that are hatched. We found that losses of poults during the first 3-4 weeks can be significant, averaging about 50%.

The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources conducted a similar study on wild turkeys during the same time frame. We are currently coordinating with them and with statisticians from North Carolina State University to combine data from respective states to gain an even more extensive evaluation of turkey survival and reproduction. These works will increase our understanding of wild turkey ecology and strengthen our management programs.

Major funding for the Virginia and the joint Virginia-West Virginia turkey studies was provided by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, The National Wild Turkey Federation, The Virginia State Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation, The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service through Federal Aid, and the U.S. Forest Service. We also owe a big thanks to those volunteers who assisted with various phases of the project, landowners who gave us permission to use their property, hunters who provided information, and the all the field staff who contributed to the project. □

Gary Norman is VDGIF's Forest Game Bird Project Leader.



1995 Trout

by Larry Mohn

VDGIF Fisheries Regional Manager

Introduction

Virginia contains over 2800 miles of trout streams in addition to numerous ponds, small lakes and reservoirs. The total includes over 2200 miles of wild trout streams and about 600 miles of water inhabited with stocked trout. Virginia's diversified trout habitat offers a wide range of trout fishing opportunities.

Virginia's warm climate and topography generally limit trout habitat to the western portion of the state. The Blue Ridge and Allegheny Mountains provide the elevation to maintain low water temperatures year-round, while the valley between these ranges contains the unique limestone formations necessary to produce highly productive spring creeks.

Trout management in Virginia consists of three basic programs. The *catchable stocking program* is the best known and most popular. Such waters are periodically stocked with catchable-sized trout. See the following *Trout Stocking Plan* on pages 12-13 for the streams and lakes stocked and their stocking schedule.

The *wild trout program* includes the management of reproducing populations of brook, rainbow and brown trout. Efforts are directed primarily at habitat preservation and proper regulation for protection of spawning stocks.

The *fingerling stocking program* involves sublegal trout stockings. This relatively small program is rapidly

Rainbow trout; illustration by Eric H. Mansfield

growing in size and popularity due to the high quality trout fishing provided.

Restrictions have been applied to certain wild trout waters as well as several types of stocked trout streams to provide anglers with the opportunity to catch more and larger trout throughout the fishing season. These special regulation areas include some of the state's best trout waters and are described in detail in this guide.

Trout season in Virginia in 1995 opens the third Saturday in March. Fishing success for wild and stocked trout is best from April through mid-June. After this period, warm weather and normally low flow conditions make fishing more difficult. The dedicated fisherman, however, can find good trout fishing opportunities throughout the year.

All stocked, special regulation, and larger wild trout waters are featured on the five maps beginning on page 25 in this special guide.

New For 1995

The Department adopted a number of regulation changes that become effective in 1995 that will significantly alter the trout program. Most notable is the year-round season for trout that will become effective on July 1, 1995. This change will result in major modifications to the trout stocking plan to better take advantage of favorable fall and winter water conditions and more trout fishing opportunity. Look for a detailed overview of the new program in the September issue of *Virginia Wildlife*.

Another significant change eliminates the requirement to have a trout license from June 16th through September 30th in designated stocked trout waters. Several new special regulation waters have been added including Big Wilson and Little Wilson Creeks in Grayson County, two sections of South Fork Holston River in Smyth County, and Roaring Fork in Tazewell County.

Size limits have been increased in the special regulation sections of Whitetop Laurel, Green Cove Creek and Conway River, and the three trout reservoirs: Lake Moomaw, Flannagan and Philpott, have been changed to trophy regulations. The creel limit has been increased from five to six at all fee-fishing areas and the delayed harvest regulation has been extended two weeks in the spring to May 31st. Finally, by act of the Virginia Legislature, the trout license has been increased to $12.00, effective January 1, 1995.

Catchable Trout Stocking Program

As in most states, put-n-take trout fishing draws the most interest and attention in Virginia, probably because of the availability of catchable-sized trout and ease of capture. Virginia's catchable program is supported by hatcheries located at Marion, Paint Bank and Wytheville. Three rearing facilities are located at Marion, Williamsville, and Montebello.

Trout eggs are collected from large brood stock in early fall at the hatcheries, and placed in hatching jars which maintain an even flow of well-oxygenated water through the eggs. Jars must be constantly cleaned and dead eggs removed to control disease. After 25 to 30 days the trout begin to hatch. The small "fry," as they are called, remain attached to their egg sacs for about 14 days, and draw their food from it. The fry are kept indoors in small troughs until their sacs are absorbed and they begin taking small pelleted food. When they reach a suitable fingerling stage (2-3 inches) they are transported to rearing facilities where they are placed in raceways.

The fish are fed several times daily for at least a year until they reach catchable size (9-11 inches). During this rearing period, it is necessary to clean raceways daily to control disease and occasionally grade fish to ensure that the larger trout will not eat smaller ones.

The cost of this program is derived primarily from the trout license which is required in addition to a valid state fishing license to fish in stocked trout waters. Annual output from the program is approximately 1,000,000 catchable trout in addition to variable numbers of fingerling and subcatchable trout used in other programs.

The 1995 trout season will officially open at 9 a.m. on Saturday, March 18. Streams are heavily stocked in anticipation of the large

Brown trout: photo by Doug Stamm

crowds on opening day, and most streams will receive additional introductions thereafter through June 3. The number of stockings which streams receive will vary from 1-6. Poorer quality streams will receive the fewest introductions, while better streams will be stocked more often. Most inseason introductions will occur at 2 and 2½-week intervals.

Waters to be stocked are listed by county in the following *Trout Stocking Plan* along with the last stocking date introductions are likely to occur. Call your local VDGIF office for more information.

Stocked trout streams are marked with appropriate signs which identify the portion of stream stocked. Sections so marked are open to public fishing in accordance with agreements between the Department and private landowners. This is the only case where anglers are not required to have landowner permission before fishing on private water.

Urban Fishing

The Department's Urban Fishing Program was launched in December of 1993. This program is designed to provide high-quality fishing opportunities for anglers in urban areas of the state. Currently, the program is considered a pilot project and includes the stocking of three lakes: Dorey Park Lake in Henrico County, Locust Shade Park in Prince William, and Northwest River Park in Chesapeake. Catchable trout are stocked from November through April. The program switches to channel catfish stocking for the remaining warm weather months. This program is co-sponsored by the Recreation Department in each locality. The success of the program will be evaluated over the next year in order to determine the feasibility of expanding this program to additional waters.

Special Regulations Fee Fishing Areas

The fee fishing areas offer put-n-take trout fishing with the added advantage that trout are stocked several times weekly throughout the season. The fee fishing program operates from the third Saturday in March through Labor Day at Clinch Mountain and Crooked Creek and through September 30th at Douthat. During the fee fishing season, a daily permit is required in addition to a valid Virginia fishing license. After the fee fishing season, these areas revert to designated stocked trout waters and a trout stamp is required instead of the daily permit. The creel limit at these areas is six fish per day.

Clinch Mountain Fee Fishing Area:

The Clinch Mountain Fee Fishing Area is located in southwest Virginia, about 7 miles west of Saltville. The area consists of the 330-acre Laurel Bed Lake and approximately seven miles of Big Tumbling Creek and its two major tributaries, Briar Cove Creek and Laurel Bed Creek. Big Tumbling Creek is a large, steep gradient stream with numerous small waterfalls and large, deep rocky pools. The two tributaries are much smaller with a more moderate gradient. The lake provides a good trout fishery and is used to regulate summer flow in the streams. Trout are stocked daily (except Sunday) throughout the fee period in the streams, and fishing must cease at 7:00 p.m. to allow for restocking. Camping is available at the area and the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries owns and manages the surrounding land.

Crooked Creek Fee Fishing Area

Crooked Creek is located in Carroll County, five miles east of Galax. The area consists of five miles of stream which is stocked. In addition, approximately two miles of stream are managed as a wild trout fishery. Crooked Creek is a wide, fairly low gradient stream with a gravel bottom. Surrounding land is mixed fields and woodlots not characteristic of the more common mountain stream drainages. As at the Clinch Mountain Area, fishing must cease at 7:00 p.m. to allow for restocking. No facilities are available at Crooked Creek for camping, but private facilities are available nearby.

Douthat Lake Fee Fishing Area

The Douthat Fee Fishing area was expanded in 1994 to include about four miles of Wilson Creek along with the stocking of 60-acre Douthat Lake. In addition, the fee fishing season was extended through September 30th and a children-only fishing area was established. The lake provides fishing for bass, bluegill, pickerel and catfish in addition to trout which are stocked twice weekly. The lake, stream and surrounding land are located within Douthat State Park and are administered by the Virginia Division of Parks. Available recreation includes camping, hiking and swimming in addition to fishing. Cabins are also available for rent if application is made well in advance. The park is located in a beautiful mountain setting with most of the surrounding land within the George Washington National Forest.

Delayed Harvest Trout Streams

In 1989, the Department initiated this management program with establishment of Virginia's first "delayed harvest" trout fishery. This program incorporates aspects of both fish-for-fun and put-n-take trout fishing. Catchable-sized trout are stocked in the fall, winter and spring. From October 1st through the following May 31st, only single hook artificial lures may be used and all fish must be returned unharmed. From June 1st through September 30th, general trout regulations are in effect and trout may be creeled. This management approach appears to have considerable potential to provide high-quality fishing to a large number of fishermen.

Back Creek (Bath County)

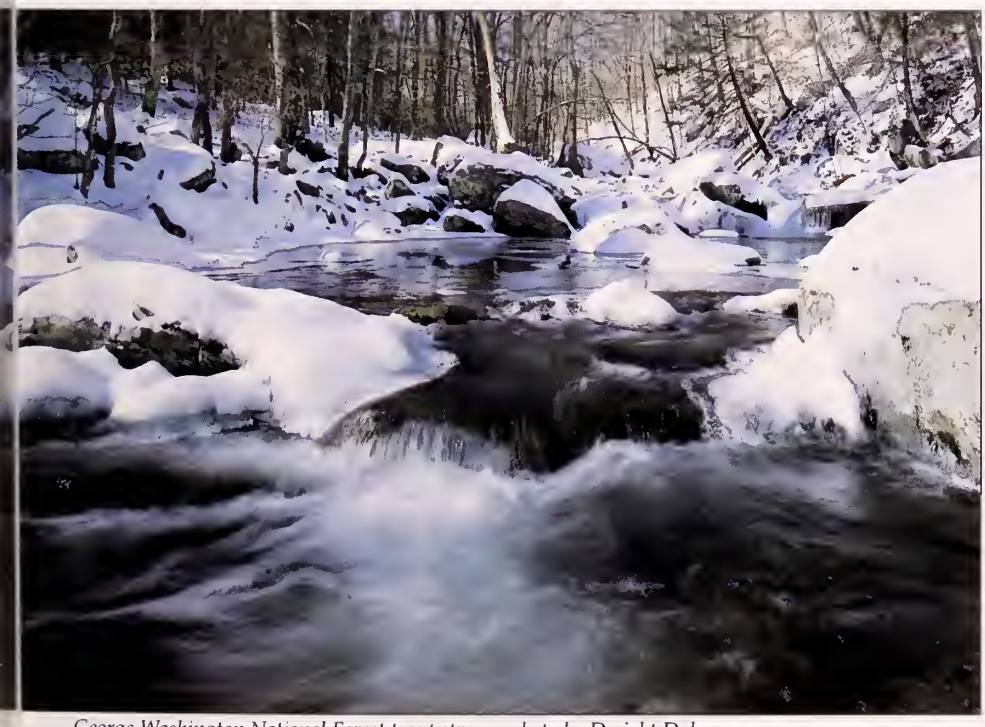
The rugged mountains that form the backdrop to the Back Creek special regulation area is one of the area's most appealing features. The stream is about 25 feet in width with moderate gradient and excellent fly-fishing opportunities. The stream has been extensively reconstructed to improve trout habitat by Virginia Power who constructed a pump storage facility just upstream. The land adjacent to this stream section is managed for recreation by Virginia Power. In addition to trout fishing, the area offers a campground, picnic pavilion, outdoor games and two warmwater lakes for fishing and swimming. Take Route 39 west from Warm Springs to Mountain Grove then right on Route 600 for six miles.

North River (Augusta County)

The delayed harvest section of the North River extends from the base of Elkhorn Dam downstream 1.5 miles to the head of Staunton City Reservoir. This is a remote section of stream that can only be reached by foot trail. Access is available by parking at Elkhorn Lake and following the trail along the lake to the spillway. This area provides a remote, scenic fishing opportunity during the winter and spring months. Stream flow in the North River is usually low during summer and fall months.

South River (Augusta County)

The delayed harvest section extends from the Second Street bridge in Waynesboro upstream 2.4 miles to the base of Rife Loth Dam. This stream section runs through the city of Waynesboro and is in an urban setting. South River is a relatively large, wide stream with shallow runs and riffles. The stream provides outstanding fly-fishing opportunities because of its size and its abundance of aquatic insects. The stream is open to fishing year-round and provides excellent winter fishing.



George Washington National Forest trout stream; photo by Dwight Dyke.

Jackson River (Bath County)

The special regulation area of the Jackson River in Bath County is stocked several times a year with catchable-sized trout and requires use of artificial lures only and a minimum size limit of 12 inches. It extends from the USFS swing bridge just above the mouth of Muddy Run, upstream 3.0 miles to the last ford on FS 481D. This section of river had previously been managed as put-n-take. The special regulation area can only be reached by foot travel, either from the Hidden Valley area or off of Route 623 and FS Road 481. This area provides a remote fishing opportunity on a relatively large, productive stream. A trout license is required to fish.

Catchable Trout Stocking Plan

Very few changes have been made to the following list of streams and lakes that are being stocked in 1995. Only one stream, Cedar Creek in Frederick County, has been dropped from the list of stocked trout waters. The land, which includes this section of stream, is currently in the process of being transferred to new ownership and is posted. Three new waters have been added to the list: Happy Creek in Warren County, Lincolnshire Lake in Tazewell County, and Thompson WMA Pond in Fauquier County.

Eric H. Mansfield

1995 Catcha

	Spring Stocking Completed By
ALBEMARLE COUNTY	
Moorman River (N & S Forks)*	5/20
Sugar Hollow Reservoir	5/27
ALLEGHANY COUNTY	
Clifton Forge Reservoir*	6/3
Smith Creek*	4/22
Pounding Mill Creek*	4/15
Jerrys Run*	4/22
AMHERST COUNTY	
Davis Mill Creek*	5/20
Little Irish Creek*	4/22
Pedlar River (Upper)*	6/3
Pedlar River (Lower)*	6/3
Piney River (S. Fk. & Proper)*	6/3
AUGUSTA COUNTY	
North River (Lower)*	5/13
North River (Upper)*	4/22
Mills Creek*	4/15
Braley Pond*	5/20
Back Creek*	5/13
Upper Sherando Lake*	5/20
Lower Sherando Lake*	5/20
Hearthstone Lake*	5/20
Falls Hollow*	4/15
Elkhorn Lake*	5/20
BATH COUNTY	
Back Creek*	5/13
Pads Creek*	4/22
Jackson River (Hidden Valley)*	6/3
Jackson River (Rt. 623)*	6/3
Bullpasture River	6/3
Spring Run	6/3
Douthat Lake	—
Jackson River Special Reg.*	6/3
BEDFORD COUNTY	
Hunting Creek*	6/3
Liberty Lake	5/6
BLAND COUNTY	
Lick Creek	5/20
Laurel Fork Creek	4/15
BOTETOURT COUNTY	
Jennings Creek*	5/20
North Creek*	5/20
Middle Creek*	4/22
McFalls Creek*	4/22
Roaring Run*	5/20
BUCHANAN COUNTY	
Dismal River	5/20
Russell Fork River	4/8
CARROLL COUNTY	
Crooked Creek	5/20
Laurel Fork Creek	5/20
Little Reed Island Creek	6/3
Lovills Creek**	3/25
Stewarts Creek	5/6

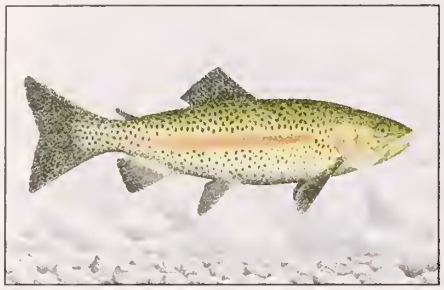
	Spring Stocking Completed By
CHESAPEAKE CITY	
Northwest River Park****	4/29
CRAIG COUNTY	
Barbours Creek*	5/6
North Fork Barbours Creek***	
Potts Creek*	6/3
DICKENSON COUNTY	
Cranesnest River	4/22
Frying Pan Creek	5/20
Russell Fork River (Haysi)	5/20
Pound River	6/3
Russell Fork (Bartlick)	6/3
FAUQUIER COUNTY	
Thompson WMA Pond	4/29
FLOYD COUNTY	
Mira Fork	5/20
Burkes Fork	6/3
Goose Creek	4/1
Howell Creek	5/6
Little Indian Creek	5/6
Little River	5/20
Laurel Fork	5/20
West Fork Little River	5/6
Rush Fork***	
FRANKLIN COUNTY	
Green Creek	5/6
Maggadee Creek	5/6
Runnett Bag Creek	4/29
FREDERICK COUNTY	
Winchester Lake	5/13
Hogue Creek	5/20
Paddy Run*	5/6
Clearbrook Lake	5/13
GILES COUNTY	
Big Stoney Creek*	6/3
Dismal Creek*	5/20
GRAYSON COUNTY	
Big Wilson Creek	5/20
Middle Fox Creek	6/3
Big Fox Creek*	5/20
Elk Creek	6/3
Helton Creek*	6/3
Hales Lake*	6/3
GREENE COUNTY	
Lynch River	4/8
South River	5/20
HENRICO COUNTY	
Dorey Park Lake****	4/29
HENRY COUNTY	
Smith River (Dam)	6/3
Smith River (Lower)	6/3
HIGHLAND COUNTY	
Bullpasture River	6/3
S. Br. Potomac River	5/20

ble Trout Stocking Plan

	Spring Stocking Completed By
LEE COUNTY	
Martins Creek	6/3
North Fork Powell River	6/3
MADISON COUNTY	
Hughes River	5/27
Robinson River	5/20
Rose River	5/20
MONTGOMERY COUNTY	
Craigs Creek*	4/15
Poverty Creek*	4/1
South Fork Roanoke River	6/3
Toms Creek	4/15
NELSON COUNTY	
Tye River	6/3
South Rockfish River	4/1
PAGE COUNTY	
Cub Run*	5/13
Upper Passage Creek*	4/22
Hawksbill Creek	4/29
PATRICK COUNTY	
Ararat River**	5/13
Clarks Creek	5/13
Dan River (Above Talbot)	6/3
Dan River (Below Powerhouse)	6/3
South Mayo River (North Fork)	5/13
South Mayo River (South Fork)	5/13
Rockcastle Creek	6/3
Round Meadow Creek	6/3
Poorhouse Creek	5/13
PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY	
Locust Shade Park****	4/29
Quantico MCB	4/29
PULASKI COUNTY	
Peak Creek	5/6
ROANOKE COUNTY	
Glade Creek	5/13
Roanoke River (City)	5/13
Tinker Creek	5/13
Roanoke River (Salem)	5/13
ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY	
Mill Creek*	5/20
Irish Creek*	5/13
South River	5/13
Maury River	5/20
ROCKINGHAM COUNTY	
North Fork Shenandoah River	5/20
German River	4/22
Dry River	5/13
Silver Lake	4/22
Shoemaker River**	4/22
Briery Lake*	5/13
Hone Quarry Lake*	5/20
Hone Quarry Run*	5/13
Slate Lick Lake*	5/6
RUSSELL COUNTY	
Big Cedar Creek	6/3

	Spring Stocking Completed By
SCOTT COUNTY	
Little Stoney Creek*	5/20
Stock Creek	5/20
Big Stoney Creek	5/20
Straight Fork (Lower)	5/20
Bark Camp Lake*	6/3
SHENANDOAH COUNTY	
Stoney Creek	6/3
Mill Creek	5/20
Peters Mill Creek*	4/15
Tomahawk Pond*	5/13
Passage Creek*	5/20
Little Passage Creek*	4/15
SMYTH COUNTY	
South Fork Holston River (Lower)	6/3
Staleys Creek	6/3
South Fork Holston River (Gorge)*	6/3
Comers Creek*	5/20
Hurricane Creek*	4/29
Cressy Creek*	4/8
Dickeys Creek*	4/15
Middle Fork Holston River	5/20
TAZEWELL COUNTY	
Cove Creek	6/3
Laurel Creek*	5/20
Roaring Fork*	5/20
Little Tumbling Creek	6/3
Lake Witten	5/20
Lincolnshire Lake	5/20
WARREN COUNTY	
Happy Creek	5/20
WASHINGTON COUNTY	
Whitetop Laurel (Upper)*	6/3
Whitetop Laurel (Lower)*	6/3
Tennessee Laurel	6/3
Big Brumley Creek	4/29
Valley Creek	4/8
Big Tumbling Creek	6/3
Straight Branch*	6/3
Bear Tree Impoundment*	6/3
WISE COUNTY	
Clear Creek*	4/8
High Knob Lake*	5/13
Middle Fork Powell River	5/20
WYTHE COUNTY	
Stoney Creek*	4/1
Gullion Fork Creek*	4/1
Gullion Fork Ponds	4/1
West Fork Reed Creek*	4/15
Cripple Creek	5/20

* National Forest Streams
** Not Stocked Preseason
*** Stocked Preseason Only
****Urban fishing waters, trout license required November 1 through April 30



Eric H. Mansfield

Trout Species Of Virginia

Trout belong to the salmon family (Salmonidae) which are native only to the northern hemisphere. Salmonidae includes trout, salmon, char, whitefish and grayling.

Brook Trout
(Salvelinus fontinalis)

Coloration: The brook trout is Virginia's most colorful trout species. Its back is dark olive green with light, wormy lines. Its sides have light spots on a dark background and red spots surrounded by a bluish halo. Often each entire side has a bluish tint. Its belly area is generally white with intense orange-red streaking during spawning season. Lower fins are distinctively marked with an outer white edge, black line and reddish coloration.

Distribution: The brook trout is endemic to eastern North America, meaning that originally it occurred in no other region. Initial distribution included the Atlantic seaboard south to Cape Cod, the Appalachians south to Georgia, then extending west through the Great Lakes to Minnesota and north to Hudson Bay. Due to its popularity as a gamefish, however, it has been introduced into many other regions and is now found in much of the western United States, Europe, South America, New Zealand and Asia. No other species of trout occurred in Virginia prior to man's stocking activities.

Biology: Brook trout generally spawn in October and November in Virginia. Spawning takes place in small streams, generally near the tail of a pool. Brook trout generally move upstream to spawn, often into the smaller headwater tributaries. An average female in Virginia lays approximately 100 eggs in a clean gravel bed. Eggs hatch about two months after they are spawned, and fry emerge from the gravel the following March.

Brook trout in Virginia reach sexual maturity at 2 years of age with an average length of 6.5 inches. Life span of this species is generally less than 4 years in this region, with most fish reaching about 12 inches in length by this time. Brook trout to 18 inches have been collected in Virginia and some streams contain occasional trout of 12 to 16 inches. However, very few fish in a population can be expected to reach this size even with restricted fishing.

The diet of brook trout consists of almost anything in the stream. Although the preferred foods consist of aquatic and terrestrial invertebrates, salamanders and frogs are also taken. In most cases, available food is a limiting factor in the unproductive mountain streams common to Virginia. Therefore, fish must be nonselective and opportunistic to compete. **State Record:** 5 lbs. 10 ozs., Big Stony Creek, Shenandoah County.

Dwight Dyke

Rainbow Trout
(Onchorynchus mykiss)

Coloration: This fish has an olive-green back often with a silvery cast grading to a silvery white underside. The dominant characteristic is the pink band extending from the cheek to near the tail. Rainbows are generally well spotted with black spots intensifying on the upper fins and tail. The anal fin is often tipped with white in streambed fish.

Distribution: Rainbow trout are native to the eastern Pacific Coast from Alaska to northern Mexico eastward to the continental divide. The steelhead is the same species, differing only in its need to migrate to and from the ocean. Rainbows have been widely distributed and now occur throughout the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, South America, Africa, Japan, Asia, Europe and Hawaii. In Virginia, the species is well established in the southwestern region of the state and is the dominant trout in the Mt. Rogers Area. North of Roanoke, distribution is quite scattered with most rainbow populations occurring in spring creeks. Although rainbow trout have displaced the brook trout over much of its range in the southeastern United States, most of the remaining brook trout habitat in

Virginia does not appear suitable for the rainbow.

Biology: Life history of various rainbow trout populations can differ significantly. Certain strains will migrate from a lake or ocean into streams to spawn, while others may remain in the same stream throughout their life. Also, time of spawning can vary greatly between populations. Certain behavioral and physiological differences are genetic, providing fish managers with additional management tools .

In Virginia, most wild rainbow trout populations are strictly stream residents. Spawning occurs in gravel beds similar to those used by brook trout. The major difference is that rainbow trout are basically spring spawners, laying eggs in March. Hatchery managers have altered this natural spawning time, however, to create fall spawners for hatchery purposes. This fall spawning characteristic is apparently retained by some of Virginia's wild rainbow trout populations. Rainbow trout also have greater reproductive potential than brooks, with females laying 800 to 1000 eggs depending on the size of the fish. This higher reproductive capacity is probably the reason over-exploitation is less of a problem than it is with brook trout.

The diet of rainbows is quite similar to that of brook trout. Larger rainbows often show a greater preference for minnows than do brook trout, but the main diet still consists of invertebrates. Rainbows are somewhat more selective than brook trout and therefore slightly more difficult to catch.

Rainbows have the potential to attain a much greater size than brook trout, but in Virginia's mountain streams they exhibit similar growth and age structure. In spring creeks and large reservoirs, however, rainbow trout over 5 pounds are not uncommon. **State Record:** 14 lbs. 7 ozs., Greer Trout Pond, Grayson County.

M.L. Giovannetti

Left: Big Wilson Creek in Grayson County is one of the many streams stocked throughout the season. Above: Brook trout are our only native trout in Virginia.

Brown Trout
(Salmo trutta)

Coloration: The dorsal area of this fish is generally brown, giving way to silvery sides and a yellowish underbelly. Pronounced black spots, often surrounded by a lighter halo, are spread along much of its body, extending well below the lateral line. In addition, irregularly shaped red or orange spots are also present along its sides. Some dark spots occur on the dorsal, adipose and tail fin, but such coloration is not as concentrated as on rainbows. The adipose fin is generally an orange/red color.

Distribution: Brown trout are native only to Europe and western Asia. They have been widely introduced elsewhere and are now found throughout the eastern United States, southern Canada and the Rocky Mountains, as well as in South America, Africa, Australia and New Zealand. In Virginia, brown trout distribution is limited, with most wild populations occuring in the Carroll, Floyd and Patrick County areas. Small scattered populations also occur in the lower portion of many larger wild brook trout streams throughout the state.

Biology: Brown and brook trout require similar spawning habitats often utilizing the same sites in streams containing both species. Brown trout spawn later than brook trout, generally in November and December in Virginia. They have a higher reproductive potential than the other two species, mainly because of their larger size.

Brown trout reach sexual maturity at 2 to 3 years of age. The life expectancy of this species is much longer than that of the other two trout. Although life spans of 10 to 15 years have been reported, brown trout in Virginia usually do not exceed 4 to 5 years of age. The longer life span naturally increases the potential size of the brown despite annual growth rates similar to brook trout. Small mountain streams that rarely have brook trout over 12 inches will often produce brown trout over 20 inches.

Brown trout are highly carnivorous, maintaining a diet of insects, crustaceans, mollusks, salamanders, frogs, rodents, and fish. Fish and crayfish are the predominant diet of browns over 12 inches while smaller trout generally stick to invertebrates. Larger browns have a tendency to feed at dusk and after dark, making the larger fish difficult to catch. **State Record:** 14 lbs. 12 ozs., South Fork of the Holston River.

Eric H. Mansfield

Wild Trout Program

Basically, wild trout populations require cold, well-oxygenated water, a clean stream bottom and good fish cover. In Virginia, most trout habitat losses occur through increased stream temperature, siltation and stream channel alteration.

Water temperature requirements may be the most critical factor facing Virginia's trout populations, and the state's generally warm climate and normally low summer stream flows do not help the situation. Most shaded mountain streams do not exceed 70°F during the summer, which is suitable for trout; however, clearing of only a short section of streamside vegetation during logging or farming operations can raise temperatures significantly. In most cases, maximum stream temperatures in the low 70s are within the tolerable range for trout, but such temperatures improve the habitat for other stream fishes which trout can not compete against.

Siltation and other more direct forms of habitat alteration, such as channelization, have also cost Virginia many miles of trout water. Silted stream bottoms decrease the stream's insect population, an important source of trout food. Siltation also makes trout reproduction difficult. Trout lay eggs in stream gravel, and clean gravel is necessary to insure movement of oxygenated water over the eggs. As little as a quarter inch of silt over trout eggs can result in 100% mortality.

Alteration of stream channels is also of critical concern, not only due to the increased siltation it causes, but also to the removal of fish cover and the potential to raise water temperatures. Trout require overhead cover such as an undercut bank, large rocks or submerged logs. When such cover is removed, the trout leave. Lack of suitable cover limits the number of large trout a stream can support.

Virginia has lost many good trout populations over the past two decades due to habitat degradation. However, the data made available by the Department's recently completed stream survey has supplied biologists with the information needed to protect critical habitat. The trend has now been reversed and it is expected that trout habitat will show steady quality improvement over the next 10 years.

The trout stream survey identified well over 2,000 miles of wild trout habitat. Biologists were encouraged to find that brook trout, the only trout native to Virginia, account for 80 percent of the wild trout resource in the state. Rainbow trout, a western introduction, have taken over most of the brook trout habitat in the Southeastern United States. Virginia trout streams provide more fishing for native brook trout than all other Southeastern streams combined.

Growth rates of wild trout, particularly brook trout, in Virginia are exceptional when compared with growth rates for similar streams in some other states. In most streams, adult brook trout in Virginia average 8 to 10 inches by their third year of age. In respect to the number of streams available and the size of trout present, Virginia probably offers the best native brook trout fishing south of New England.

The major management problem associated with Virginia streams appears to be excessive fishing pressure on many of the more popular wild trout streams, with consequent over-exploitation. Unlike warmwater fish such as bass and bluegill, trout have a very low ability to reproduce. Therefore, in heavily fished areas, it is imperative to protect trout until they are able to spawn at least once. In order to accomplish this objective, a 7-inch minimum size limit has been imposed on all trout creeled in Virginia. Such a limit will allow most wild trout to reach spawning age before they are harvested.

Dwight Dyke

Virginia is blessed with over 2,000 miles of wild trout habitat. We are proud of the fact that our native brook trout account for 80 percent of the wild trout resource in the state, though some wild rainbows ***(right, top)*** *can be caught in special regulation areas.*

Special Regulation Wild Trout Streams

In the following streams, regulations require use of single hook artificial lures and all trout less than 9 inches in length be returned to the water unharmed. The exceptions are the Rapidan River and its tributaries, Stewart's Creek, North Fork Moorman River, Dan River, East Fork of Chestnut Creek, Big Wilson and Little Wilson Creeks Roaring Fork and South Fork Holston River, which require the release of all fish caught, and Whitetop Laurel/Green Cove Creeks which have a 12-inch minimum size limit.

Buffalo Creek (Amherst County)

Special regulations apply to that portion of North Fork of Buffalo Creek and its tributaries within the George Washington National Forest. Access is available by forest trail off of Forest Road 51 or from the end of State Route 635. Buffalo Creek is a moderate to high gradient stream dominated by large boulders and deep pools. The stream contains a good native brook trout population with numerous fish 8 to 10 inches in length.

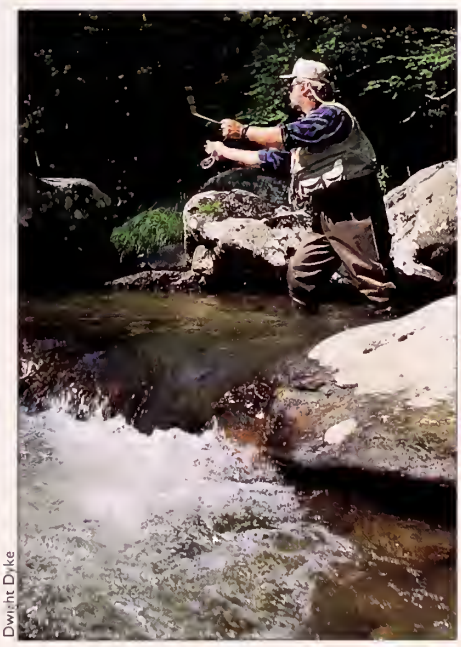
Big and Little Wilson Creeks (Grayson County)

The special regulation sections of Big Wilson and Little Wilson Creeks and their tributaries include all portions of each stream within the boundaries of Grayson Highlands State Park and the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area. Big and Little Wilson Creeks provide the opportunity to fish for both wild rainbow and brook trout. Brook trout are primarily restricted to the headwaters of both streams and their tributaries. Rainbow trout can be found throughout the area. Big Wilson Creek offers some spectacular scenery. Large boulders predominate the stream channel, interspersed with deep pools associated with a steep gradient characterize the stream. Access can be gained through Grayson Highlands State Park or Route 806 and 817 off U.S. Route 58. Be prepared to do some hiking to fish this area.

Conway River/Devils Ditch (Greene County)

Special regulations apply to that portion of Conway River and its major tributary, Devils Ditch, within the Rapidan Wildlife Management Area. The stream contains brook trout in the upper reaches with wild brown trout scattered through the lower portions. Adult brook trout range from 7-11 inches in length, brown trout occasionally exceed 20 inches. The stream lies north of Stanardsville and can be reached by Route 615 from Graves Mill. The area adjoins the Shenandoah National Park.

Rainbow trout: photo by Doug Stamm



Dwight Dyke

Dan River (Patrick County)

The Dan River in Patrick County from the Pinnacles Powerhouse to Townes Dam is the fourth stream in the state designated as a catch-and-release trout fishery. The Dan River below the Pinnacles Powerhouse (Kibler Valley) remains put-and-take trout water. Reproducing brown trout are the dominant species in the lower reaches of the section, while wild brook trout are found in the upper reaches. This three-mile section of the Dan River has been subjected to very low flows for years, however, a new agreement with the City of Danville has resulted in greatly improved flows. The special regulation section can be reached by taking Route 8 south of Stuart to Route 103 west, turn right on Route 648 at Claudeville and proceed to the powerhouse. In addition, the section can be reached by taking Route 614 south from the Meadows of Dan. Turn left on Route 602 from Route 614 and proceed to Townes Dam. A permit from the City of Danville is required and can be obtained at no charge at the Pinnacles Powerhouse or from the City Utilities Department. Contact: City of Danville, Director of Electric Division, Department of Utilities, P.O. Box 3300, Danville, VA 24543. Phone: 804/ 799-5270.

East Fork of Chestnut Creek (Grayson and Carroll Counties)

East Fork of Chestnut Creek, locally known as Farmer's Creek, has recently been designated a catch-and-release trout fishery. The special regulation section includes all portions of the creek upstream of the Blue Ridge Parkway. The lower mile of the special regulation area is a low gradient native brook trout stream with numerous deep pools and undercut banks. The stream decreases in size and increases in gradient upstream and is characterized by numerous small plunge pools and a dense rhododendron canopy. Adult brook trout average 8-13 inches in

length with occasional larger fish in the lower reaches. The stream lies south of Galax, crossing the Blue Ridge Parkway a short distance east of Route 89.

Little Stony Creek (Giles County)

Special regulations apply to that portion of Little Stony Creek in the Jefferson National Forest. Most of the special section is below the Cascades waterfall. The upper reaches of Little Stony Creek contain native brook trout, but rainbow trout comprise most of the trout population below the Cascades. Adult rainbows average 7-12 inches in length. The area is heavily used by hikers and picnickers. The stream is located near Pembroke and can be reached by Route 623.

Little Stony Creek (Shenandoah County)

Little Stony Creek is a small mountain brook trout stream. The special regulations apply to that portion of stream above Woodstock Reservoir. Adult brook trout presently average from 7-10 inches in length. The stream is located west of Woodstock and Forest Service Road 92 crosses the lower portion of the special regulation section. Much of the upper reaches can only be reached by foot trail.

North Creek (Botetourt County)

The upper section of the stream (above the first bridge upstream of the North Creek campground) is designated for special regulations, while the lower portion remains put-n-take trout water. Rainbow trout predominate, although brook trout are present in the headwater tributaries. Adult trout will range from 7-12 inches. The stream is located east of Buchanan, a short distance from I-81. The Jefferson National Forest maintains a campground adjacent to the stream and vehicular access is available along most of its length.

North Fork Moorman River (Albemarle County)

The Shenandoah National Park designates that portion of the Moorman River within the Park as a fish-for-fun stream. The stream contains an excellent population of brook trout with numerous adults of 8 to 12 inches. In addition, a small population of wild brown trout can be found in the lower half of the stream. Moorman River can be reached by State Route 614 past Sugar Hollow Reservoir. A good foot trail parallels the stream from the Park boundary.

Ramsey's Draft (Augusta County)

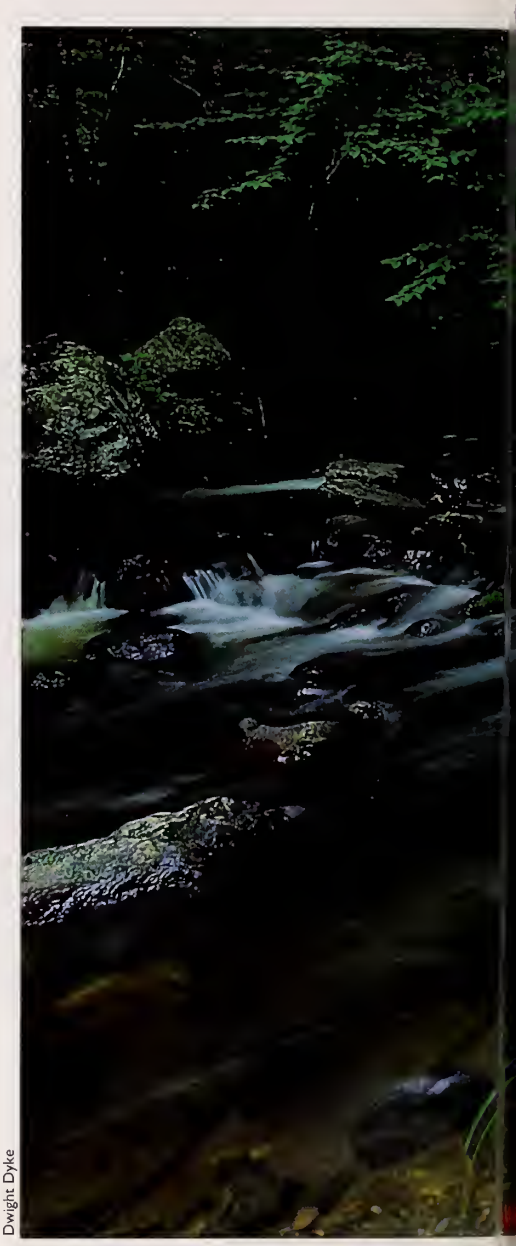
Ramsey's Draft and its tributaries within the George Washington National Forest became a special regulation trout stream in 1991. Over 10 miles of fishable water, primarily within the recently created Ramsey's Draft Wilderness Area, provides anglers with an opportunity to catch native brook trout up to 10 inches in length in a remote setting. Late summer stream flows are often quite low, so plan to fish Ramsey's Draft during the springtime. To reach Ramsey's Draft, drive 15 miles west of Churchville on State Route 250 and look for the Mountain Home Picnic Area on the right. A foot trail parallels the stream from the picnic area.

Rapidan River (Madison County)

The Rapidan is our best-known special regulation trout stream. The special regulation area includes that portion of the stream within the Shenandoah National Park and the Rapidan Wildlife Management Area. The stream may be reached by Route 662 from Graves Mill or Route 649 from Criglersville. A dirt road parallels most of the stream but the upper portion is gated. Native brook trout are the dominant species and adult trout range from 7-14 inches in length. Due to the special no creeling regulation, the Rapidan contains many 10-11 inch trout.

Roaring Fork (Tazewell County)

This special regulation area is located within the boundaries of the Beartown Wilderness Area of the Jefferson National Forest. Acidification of this stream resulting in a steadily declining brook trout population prompted the inclusions of this stream section into Virginia's catch and release trout regulations. Access to the special regulated section is difficult and some hiking will be required. Access can be gained from Forest Service Road 222 off of Route 16, south of Tazewell.



Dwight Dyke

St. Mary's River (Augusta County)

The special regulation section includes all portions of the St. Mary's River above the gate at the National Forest boundary. It is a fairly high gradient stream with a number of

waterfalls. Although water levels can get quite low along lower reaches, flows are much improved upstream and large, deep pools provide ample trout cover. Adult brook trout average 8-12 inches in length. Due to acidification of the stream in recent years, brook trout have replaced rainbows as the dominant trout species. The stream lies east of Raphine off of Route 608 a short distance from I-81. Most of the area is accessible by foot trail only and backpacking is popular .

In respect to the number of streams available and the size of trout present, Virginia probably offers the best native brook trout fishing south of New England.

South Fork Holston River (Smyth County)

This section of the South Fork Holston River lies within the property boundaries of VDGIF's Buller Fish Hatchery. Regulations which allow only the use of artificial lures and catch and release are in effect. This special regulation section of stream provides an excellent opportunity to catch trout of trophy size. Access can be gained through the Buller Fish Hatchery property off of Route 650, south of Marion.

Stewart's Creek (Carroll County)

Stewart's Creek is another of the catch-and-release trout fisheries in the state. It is a high-gradient native brook trout stream with numerous plunge pools, rock ledges, and a dense rhododendron canopy for cover. Approximately 4.5 miles of Stewart's Creek and its two major tributaries, North Fork and South Fork Stewart's Creek, were opened to the public in 1989 for year-round fishing. Only single hook, artificial lures can be used.

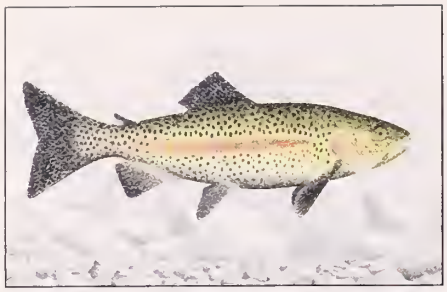
Stewart's Creek Wildlife Management Area is southeast of Galax on the North Carolina side of the Blue Ridge Parkway. Take exit 1 off I-77. Follow the trailblazer signs to the area.

Whitetop Laurel/Green Cove Creeks (Washington County)

The special regulation area includes the lower mile of Green Cove Creek plus Whitetop Laurel Creek from the mouth of Green Cove to the first bridge above the village of Taylors Valley. Whitetop Laurel is one of Virginia's largest and most beautiful wild trout streams. Wild rainbow trout dominate, with most adults in the 7-14-inch class. A few wild brown trout provide occasional trophy fish. The special regulation area is located east of Damascus near the Tennessee line and lies within the Mount Rogers Recreation Area. Minimum size limit in this section is 12 inches.

Shenandoah National Park

The Park provides an entire region of special regulation trout streams extending from Front Royal to Waynesboro. Regulations require the use of single hook, artificial lures only, and restrict daily creel limits to five fish, all of which must be eight inches or more in length. The season is open from the third Saturday in March through October 15th. Most streams within the Park contain good populations of native brook trout, but not all are open to fishing. Some isolated brown trout are also found in the lower reaches of the large, east slope streams.



Eric H. Mansfield

Fingerling Stocking Program

The fingerling stocking program is the smallest of the state's three management programs, but also the fastest growing. Established in the mid-1970s, it is designed to take advantage of the natural potential of high-elevation lakes, deep reservoirs, cold-water tailwaters and spring-fed streams, to produce quality trout fishing opportunities where wild fisheries are not possible due to lack of natural reproduction.

Because summer water temperatures are usually a limiting factor to trout survival in Virginia, under this program a stream or lake must provide suitable year-round water temperatures for trout survival, have good habitat, and be productive enough to provide adequate food for good growth.

Suitable trout waters are stocked once annually with fingerling or subcatchable (smaller than the legal size limit) trout, and often length limits and angling gear restrictions are imposed to protect these small fish until they reach harvestable size. Generally, the special regulation gear restrictions imposed are necessary to avoid high hooking mortality rates that occur when bait fishing is permitted. These fish generally will be caught several times before they eventually reach harvestable size, and the program can only be successful if hooking mortality remains low.

Depending on the length limit, these stocked fish will not reach a legal size for six months to two years. During this time, these trout lose most of their hatchery characteristics, both in appearance and behavior, and create a fishery that approaches a wild one in terms of fishing experience.

Some of Virginia's most exciting trout fishing opportunities can be found within our fingerling stocking program, and by stocking small fish once a year, a high quality fishery can be developed at a fraction of the cost of the more common put-n-take program. Many anglers have discovered this quality angling and participation in the program is rapidly growing. VDGIF recognizes this growing interest and is continuing to develop new waters in the state.

Trout Lakes

The warm summer climate of Virginia limits the potential for development of good trout populations in lakes. Numerous small ponds and lakes are stocked in the spring under the catchable stocking program (see *Trout Stocking Plan*), however, very few provide good year-round trout habitat for management of wild or put-n-grow trout fisheries. In order to provide adequate coldwater habitat in Virginia, a lake must either be located at high elevations where cool summer temperatures prevail, or be deep enough to maintain a cold layer of water. Virginia has five small lakes at sufficient elevation for trout and three reservoirs deep enough to provide a two-story fishery. These two-story reservoirs stratify during summer months, providing an upper, warmwater layer where fish such as bass, bluegill, crappie and catfish exist, and a deep, coldwater layer suitable for trout.

Laurel Bed Lake (Russell County)

Laurel Bed Lake is a 330-acre, mountaintop impoundment located approximately 10 miles northwest of Saltville. The lake is included in the Clinch Mountain Fee Fishing Area and, in addition to providing a unique fishery, is used to augment flow to Big Tumbling Creek during summer months. The lake is open to fishing from the opening day of trout season until February 1, with a creel limit of five fish per day. As with the remaining sections of the fee fishing area, a daily permit is required in addition to a state fishing license. The fishery has been based almost entirely on brook trout in past years. Fishing is usually excellent through June with limits of trout being common. Favored fishing methods include nightcrawlers, meal worms, flies and spinners. Minnows are not allowed at the lake in order to prevent introduction of other fish species. Fishing usually becomes sporadic as the lake temperature increases, with fish hitting well for a few days, then slacking off for several days. Favorite summer fishing spots are located around coves where spring branches feed in. Late summer and early fall fishing is dependent on the number of fish that survive through the sum-

Doug Stamm

The fingerling stocking program is designed to take advantage of the natural potential of high-elevation lakes like Laurel Bed Lake ***(right)****, deep reservoirs, cold-water tailwaters and spring-fed streams to provide quality trout fishing opportunities which mimic a wild trout fishery.*

mer, and changes significantly from year to year. Limited camping is permitted on the management area and a concession is in operation.

Lexington City Reservoir

The Lexington City Reservoir is a Lexington Water Supply Reservoir of 22 acres. It is a put-n-grow lake that is stocked annually with brook trout. The brookies have done well in the reservoir and many measure nine to 13 inches in length.

It is a long hike across USFS lands to the reservoir and primitive camping is permitted. General fishing regulations are in effect and no trout stamp is required.

Dwight Dyke

Mills Creek and Coles Run Reservoirs

Mills Creek (17 acres) and Coles Run (13 acres) are located in the Pedlar Ranger District of the George Washington National Forest. They are both old Augusta County Water Supply Reservoirs that were first opened to fishing in 1990.

The lakes are managed as put-n-grow lakes and are stocked annually with small brook trout. Samples collected show good populations of 10 to 12-inch brook trout.

There are no facilities and access by foot is about a half mile to Coles Run and 1½ miles to Mills Creek. For more information, call the Pedlar Ranger District in Buena Vista at (703) 261-6105. Access is west of Route 664 at Sherando off of Forest Road 42.

Skidmore Lake (Switzer Dam)

Skidmore Lake is a 104-acre impoundment located off of Route 33 west of Harrisonburg. The dam was built by the Soil Conservation Service for flood control and water supply, and is now managed by the City of Harrisonburg. An access road is available off of Route 33. Boats, without motors, are permitted but must be carried to the water as no ramp is provided. Fingerling brook trout have been stocked since 1976 and fishing has been permitted since 1979. Fisherman success has been good with most fish in the 8 to 14-inch range. In addition, occasional large brook trout of 2 to 3 pounds have been taken. No camping is permitted at the lake, but primitive camping is available in the National Forest nearby.

Trophy Trout Lakes

Regulations on the following two-story reservoirs have been changed for 1995 to reflect the potential of these lakes to produce trophy-sized trout. Effective January 1, 1995, the creel limit on these reservoirs was reduced to 2 trout per day with a minimum size limit of 16 inches. These changes should result in the availability of many more large trout by next year.

John W. Flannagan Reservoir (Dickenson County)

This 1,143-acre Army Corps of Engineers reservoir is located in the Cumberland Mountains near the Va.-Kentucky state line. Nearly 50 miles of rugged shoreline terrain surround the lake perimeter. The maximum lake depth is 166 feet with an average depth of 59 feet. Beginning in October of each year, the lake level is dropped 16 feet below the normal summer pool. These conditions remain throughout the winter months until early spring.

The lake was managed primarily as a put-and-take fishery for rainbow trout from 1966 to 1976. In 1991, stocking resumed to establish the lake as a trophy fishery. Sub-catchable McConaughy rainbow and Crawford brown trout are now stocked yearly.

The results have been impressive. Fish samples collected in 1993 produced brown trout slightly in excess of four pounds and rainbows just under that. Due to the abundant forage base of alewives coupled with good trout habitat, the prospects for trophy trout being available in 1995 are excellent.

Any good shad imitation fished below 35 feet should entice these trout to hit. In the spring, early summer, and late fall, trout should be found throughout the entire lake. However, after August 1, fishing the main body of the lake from the junction boat ramp to the dam is recommended.

Several launch ramps exist and boat access areas are provided at the spillway, lower Twin Area, junction

area and both the Cranesnest and Pound River areas. Campgrounds are also available. Contact the U.S. Corps of Engineers, John W. Flannagan Dam and Reservoir, Route 1, Box 268, Haysi, VA 24256-9736.

Lake Moomaw

This flood control reservoir was completed in 1981 with the closing of the Gathright Dam on the Jackson River. It resulted in the formation of a 13-mile long, 2,530-acre reservoir with more than 43 miles of shoreline.

Much of the shoreline is adjacent to the 13,428-acre Gathright Wildlife Management Area which is owned and managed by the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. The average depth of the lake is 80 feet and flow augmentation results in a normal five to 15-foot drawdown by late summer.

Trout management at the reservoir consists of stocking subcatchable brown trout and McConaughy strain of rainbow trout.

Brown trout fishing has been good in recent years. Brown trout of 2 to 5 pounds should be numerous in 1995. McConaughy strain rainbow trout are doing very well, also. Most trout are caught by trolling with shad imitation crankbaits, some are caught still fishing with live shad 25 feet down and others by jump fishing. Some are caught incidental to bass fishing.

The area around Moomaw provides nearly year-round opportunities for boating water sports, fishing, camping, picnicking, hiking, birding, sight-seeing, photography and hunting.

Boats are restricted to a maximum length of 25 feet. No house boats are allowed and excessive noise is prohibited. Trailer-launched boats must be launched at ramps at Fortney Branch, Bolar Flat or Coles Point. Canoes and cartops can be launched at Coles Mountain Fishing Access, McClintock Bridge, McClintock Point and Midway.

The lake is open 24 hours a day, year-round. There is a 12-inch size limit on bass. Neither trout nor forest stamp is required.

The Bolar Mountain Recreation Area provides camping, swimming beaches, restrooms and picnic grounds. Bolar Flat has a picnic area, a four-lane boat dock, a courtesy dock, a marina, and restrooms. There are primitive camping areas at Greenwood and McClintock Point. The Morris Hill Campground and picnic area, the four-lane Fortney Branch ramp and courtesy dock, and the Coles Mountain Area are located on the south end of the lake in Alleghany County. A daily fee is charged for swimming, picnicking, camping and use of boat ramps.

For facilities information, contact the James River Ranger District in Covington (703) 962-2214; the Warm Springs Ranger District in Hot Springs (703) 839-2521 or 839-2442; or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Covington (703) 962-1138.

Harry Murray

Philpott Reservoir

Philpott Lake is a 2,880-acre reservoir located west of Martinsville. Warmwater fishing is the major attraction, but trout are also stocked annually. Stockings generally consist of 8 to 9-inch McConaughy rainbow trout released in the fall of the year. Fishing success has been highly variable, probably due to the varying size of the summer coldwater habitat available. Trout can be caught throughout the lake during spring, fall and winter, but during summer months, most successful fishermen fish deep at night. Philpott generally produces some of the larger rainbow trout taken each year, with catches up to 7-8 pounds.

Special Regulations

In the following streams, special regulations require the use of single hook, artificial lures and restrict creel to fish over 12 inches in length. Trout from 8-10 inches are stocked periodically and allowed to grow for several months to a year before being creeled. This approach can be used in streams that maintain good flow, cool summer waters and are productive enough for good growth of trout.

Smith Creek (Alleghany County)

The special regulation section extends from the Forest Service boundary above the old C & O Dam upstream 2.5 miles to the Clifton Forge Dam. Within this section, subcatchable brown trout are stocked

once annually. The stream contains good numbers of 8 to 12-inch brown trout with occasional fish to 20 inches. The stream maintains good flow throughout the year and provides wide, flat pools and good fly-fishing opportunities. The best way to access this stream is by Route 606 from Clifton Forge to the access road for the Clifton Forge Water Plant. Fishermen must park at the entrance and walk a half mile to the stream.

Snake Creek (Carroll County)

Special regulations apply to all of Big Snake Creek below Hull Ford and all of Little Snake Creek below the junction of Routes 922 and 674. The stream is located just north of Fancy Gap. Snake Creek is a moderate gradient, softwater, gravel bottomed stream with an average width of about 18 feet. Holdover of stocked fish is good along with a fair population of native brook trout.

Rainbow trout; photo by M.L. Giovannetti

Trophy Trout Streams

Management of a few selected streams as trophy trout water is relatively new to Virginia. Regulations restrict fishing to the use of single hook artificial lures and the creel to 2 fish per day over 16 inches (except for Mossy Creek where the creel is one fish per day over 20 inches). Mossy Creek, Sinking Creek, and Smith Creek, furthermore, are restricted to fly-fishing only. The management approach is generally to stock fingerling trout (5-6") in high quality streams where they will grow exceptionally fast.

Buffalo Creek (Rockbridge County)

The special regulation area includes that section of stream from the confluence of Colliers Creek upstream 2.9 miles to the confluence of North and South Forks of Buffalo Creek. The stream flows through private land and requires a written landowner permit to fish, which is available from the VDGIF office in Verona (please include a SASE). Brown and rainbow trout are stocked annually as subcatchables and good numbers of 10 to 16-inch fish are available. Trophy fish of 5 to 8 pounds have been caught in the stream. Buffalo Creek can be reached by taking Route 251 from Lexington.

Dan River (Patrick County)

The special regulation section is located within the Pinnacles Hydroelectric Project in what is known as the "Grand Canyon" of Virginia. The terrain is quite rugged and the scenery is spectacular. The section contains approximately six miles of stream and extends from Talbott Dam downstream to the confluence with Townes Reservoir. The fishery is maintained by natural reproduction and consists primarily of rainbow trout in the 8-12 inch size range and brown trout in the 8-18 inch size range. The upper reaches of the special regulation section can be reached by taking Route 614 south from the Meadows of Dan. Turn right on Route 601 and proceed to Talbott Dam. The lower reach of the section can only be accessed by boat at the upper end of Townes Reservoir. A permit from the City of Danville is required and can be obtained at no charge from the City Utilities Department or on site at the Pinnacles Powerhouse. Contact: City of Danville, Director of Electric Division, Department of Utilities, P.O. Box 3300, Danville, VA 24543. Phone: 804/788-5270.

Mossy Creek (Augusta County)

The special section includes about 4 miles of stream extending upstream from the Augusta/Rockingham County line. The stream is located just off of Route 42 south of Bridgewater. Fishing in Mossy Creek is restricted to fly-fishing only and a written landowner permit must be obtained (available from the VDGIF office in Verona. Please include a SASE). Mossy Creek is a classic, meadow limestone stream averaging about 15 feet in width and flowing through open pastures. Brown trout in the 3 to 7-pound class are available to fishermen.

Sinking Creek (Giles and Craig Counties)

The special area includes two sections of stream in Giles County. The first section extends from a cable with VDGIF sign 0.4 miles below the State Route 703 low-water bridge, upstream 1.8 miles to a cable with

VDGIF sign (which is 0.1 mile above the Reynolds farm covered bridge). The second section runs from a cable with VDGIF sign 1.0 mile below the State Route 642 bridge, upstream to a cable with VDGIF sign (which is 0.5 miles above the State Route 642 bridge in Craig County). Brown and rainbow trout are stocked annually and angling is restricted to fly-fishing only. A fishing permit is required to fish this stream. Permits may be obtained at the VDGIF office in Blacksburg and locally at the Twin Oaks Grocery Store on State Route 42 in Craig County, the Super Value Grocery Store in Newport, and the Orvis Shop in Roanoke.

Smith Creek (Rockingham County)

The special section includes approximately 1.5 miles of stream near Lacy Spring. Smith Creek flows through private farmland and requires a written landowner permit to fish, which is available from VDGIF office in Verona (please include a SASE). Brown trout fingerlings are stocked annually in the fall. Good numbers of 10-16 inch trout are available and fish over 4 pounds have been reported.

Smith River (Henry County)

The special area includes the posted section extending 3 miles downstream from Towne Creek near the town of Bassett. Smith River is Virginia's most noted trophy trout stream. The historic state record 18-pound, 11-ounce brown trout was taken in 1979 and numerous trout exceeding 10 pounds have been caught. Smith River is a large, flat, tailwater stream receiving coldwater discharges from Philpott Dam.

South Fork Holston River (Smyth County)

The Special Regulation section is located south of Marion and west of the community of Sugar Grove off of Route 16. Two miles of the stream, which extends from just below the confluence of Comers Creek upstream, flows through National Forest and private land. Permission is not required prior to fishing within the privately owned sections. Recently included in Virginia's special trout stream regulations, the South Fork offers the opportunity to fish for both trophy rainbow and brown trout. An abundance of 10 to 14-inch trout and some trout in excess of the 16 inches minimum size limit are available.

Eric H. Mansfield

License Requirements

All residents 16 years of age and older are required to possess a *state fishing license* to fish for trout. Persons who fish in designated stocked waters (those waters listed in the *Trout Stocking Plan*) must have an additional *trout license*. A *National Forest Stamp* is necessary when fishing in most waters within the George Washington or Thomas Jefferson National Forests. Refer to your fishing regulation pamphlet for specific exemptions and costs of licenses.

When fishing in non-designated trout waters, such as wild trout streams or special regulations areas (except the Jackson River), the angler only needs a *state fishing license*. However, many of the special regulation areas require a *signed permit card* which can be obtained at no cost from certain VDGIF offices and streamside landowners (refer to individual stream descriptions in this guide for details).

Out-of-state anglers who fish designated stocked waters need to purchase both a *non-resident state fishing license* (five-day non-resident licenses are available), a *non-resident trout license*, and a *National Forest Stamp* (where appropriate). For fishing in wild trout ozr special regulation waters (except the Jackson River), the non-resident needs only a *non-resident state fishing license*, the appropriate *National Forest Stamp* and *special regulation permits*.

Fee-fishing areas require a *state fishing license* and a *daily fishing permit* that can be obtained on site.

Senior citizens holding previously issued (but no longer available) $5 *senior lifetime fishing licenses* do not need to purchase any additional fishing or trout licenses. Plus, Virginia residents 65 years or older do not need to purchase a *National Forest Stamp*.

Please consult the regulation pamphlet available where you purchased your license for specific restrictions on size, creel, gear restrictions, and season lengths.

More Questions About Trout Fishing?

Call or write to your closest VDGIF office:

Richmond
4010 W. Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23230 (804/367-1000/VTDD).

Verona
4725 Lee Highway
Verona, VA 24482 (703/248-9360).

Vinton
209 East Cleveland Avenue
Vinton, VA 24179 (703/857-7704).

Blacksburg
2001 South Main Street
Blacksburg, VA 24060 (703/951-7923).

Lynchburg
Rt. 6, Box 410
Forest, VA 24551 (804/525-7720).

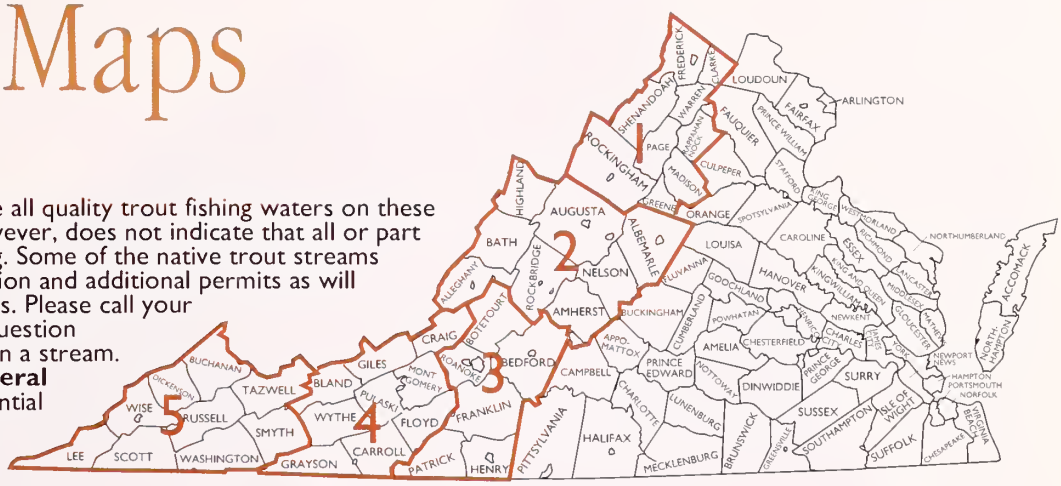
Marion
Rt. 1, Box 107
Marion, VA 24354 (703/783-4860).

Area Maps

Caution:

We have made an effort to include all quality trout fishing waters on these area maps. Inclusion of a stream, however, does not indicate that all or part of the stream is open to public fishing. Some of the native trout streams listed will require landowner permission and additional permits as will a few of the special regulation streams. Please call your district fisheries office if you have a question concerning private vs. public fishing on a stream.

In addition, we have given the **general** location of each stream, but it is essential to obtain a topographical or county map to pinpoint specific locations before you start your fishing trip.

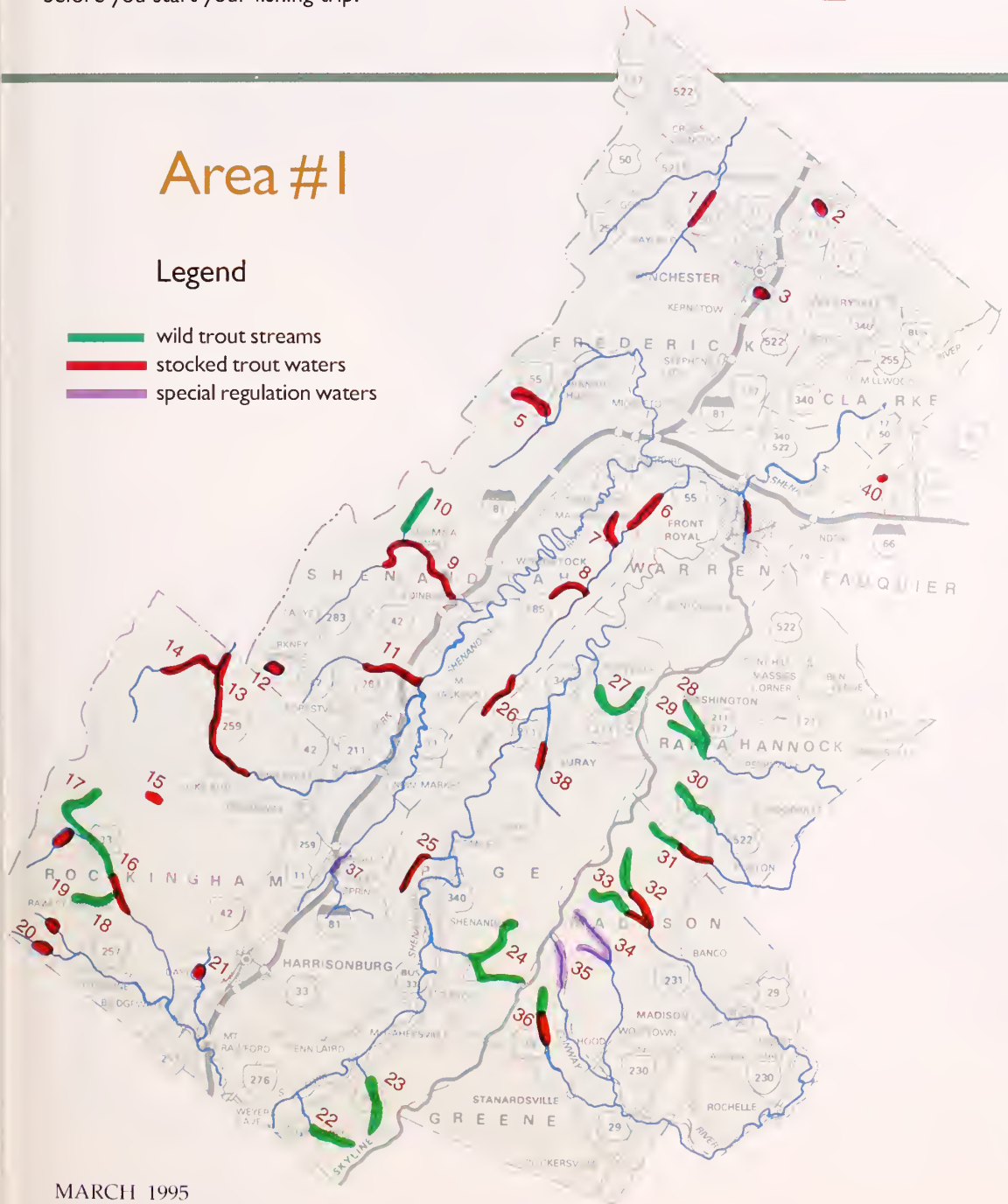


Map graphics by Pels

Area #1

Legend

- wild trout streams
- stocked trout waters
- special regulation waters



Frederick County
(1) Hogue Creek
(2) Clearbrook Lake
(3) Winchester Lakes
(5) Paddy Run

Shenandoah County
(6) Passage Creek
(7) Little Passage Creek
(8) Peters Mill Creek
(9) Big Stoney Creek
(10) Little Stoney Creek
(11) Mill Creek
(12) Tomahawk Pond

Rockingham County
(13) N. Fk. Shenandoah River
(14) German River
(15) Slate Lick Lake
(16) Dry River
(17) Switzer Lake
(18) Blacks Run
(19) Hone Quarry Lake
(20) Briery Branch Lake
(21) Silver Lake
(22) Madison Run (SNP)
(23) Big Run (SNP)
(37) Smith Creek

Page County
(24) Naked Creek (SNP)
(25) Cub Run
(26) Upper Passage Creek
(27) Jeremys Run (SNP)
(38) Hawksbill Creek

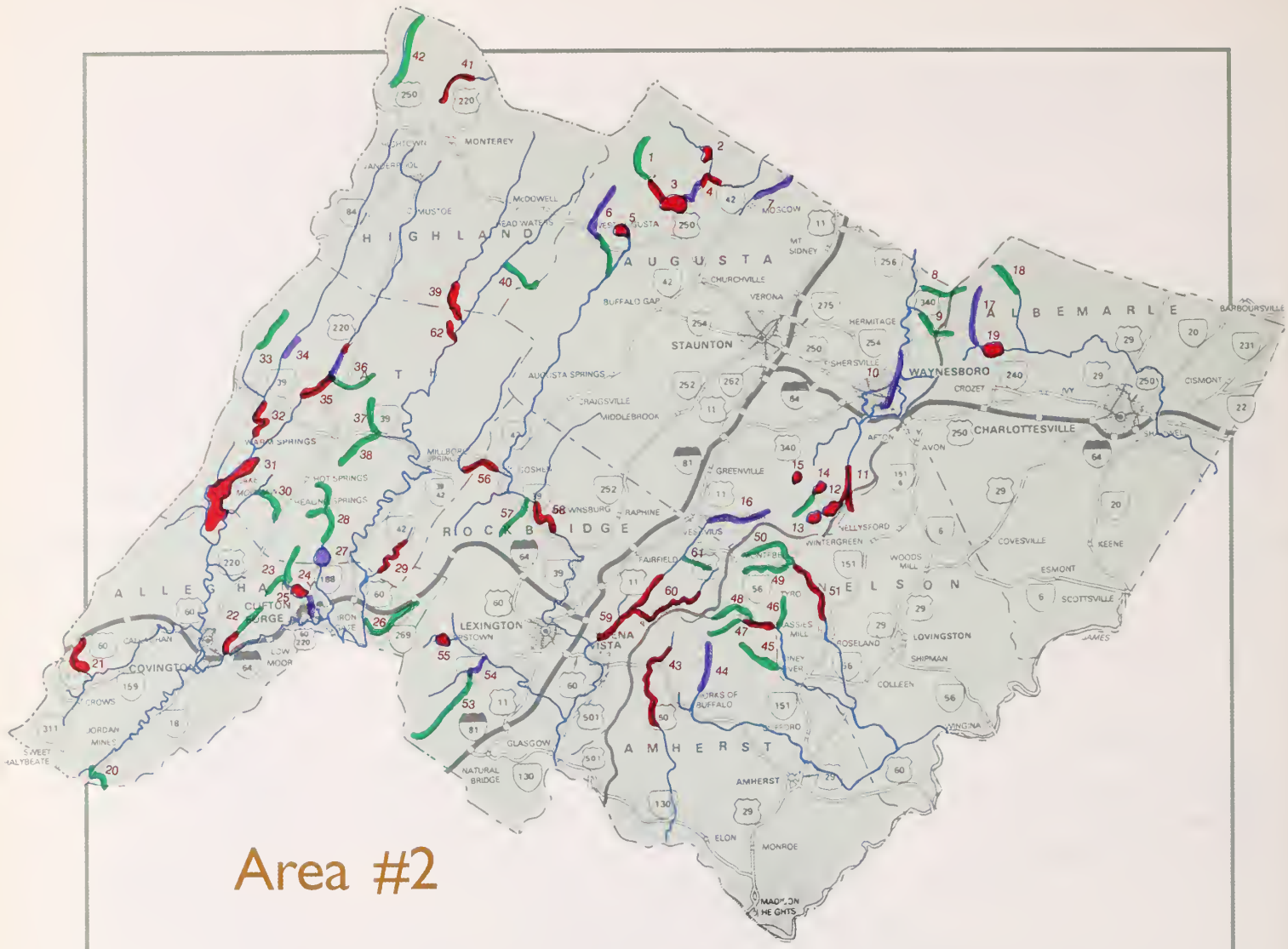
Rappahannock County
(28) Piney River (SNP)
(29) N. Fk. Thornton River (SNP)
(30) Hazel River (SNP)

Madison County
(31) Hughes Rivers (SNP)
(32) Robinson River (SNP)
(33) Rose River (SNP)
(34) Rapidan River (SNP)

Greene County
(35) Conway River
(36) South River

Warren County
(39) Happy Creek

Fauquier County
(40) Thompson WMA Pond



Area #2

Augusta County
(1) North River
(2) Hearthstone Lake
(3) Elkhorn Lake
(4) North River
(5) Braley Pond
(6) Ramseys Draft
(7) Mossy Creek
(8) Meadow Run (SNP)
(9) Paine Run (SNP)
(10) South River
(11) Back Creek
(12) Lower Sherando Lake
(13) Upper Sherando Lake
(14) Mills Creek Reservoir
(15) Coles Run Reservoir
(16) St. Marys River

Albemarle County
(17) N. Fk. Moormans River (SNP)
(18) Doyles River (SNP)
(19) Sugar Hollow Reservoir

Allegheny County
(20) Shawvers Run
(21) Jerrys Run
(22) Pounding Mill Creek
(23) Smith Creek
(24) Clifton Forge Reservoir
(25) Smith Creek
(26) Simpson Creek

Bath County
(27) Douthat Lake
(28) Wilson Creek
(29) Pads Creek
(30) Cascades Creek
(31) Lake Moomaw
(32) Back Creek
(33) Little Back Creek
(34) Back Creek
(35) Jackson River
(36) Muddy Run
(37) Jordan Run
(38) Mares Run
(62) Spring Run

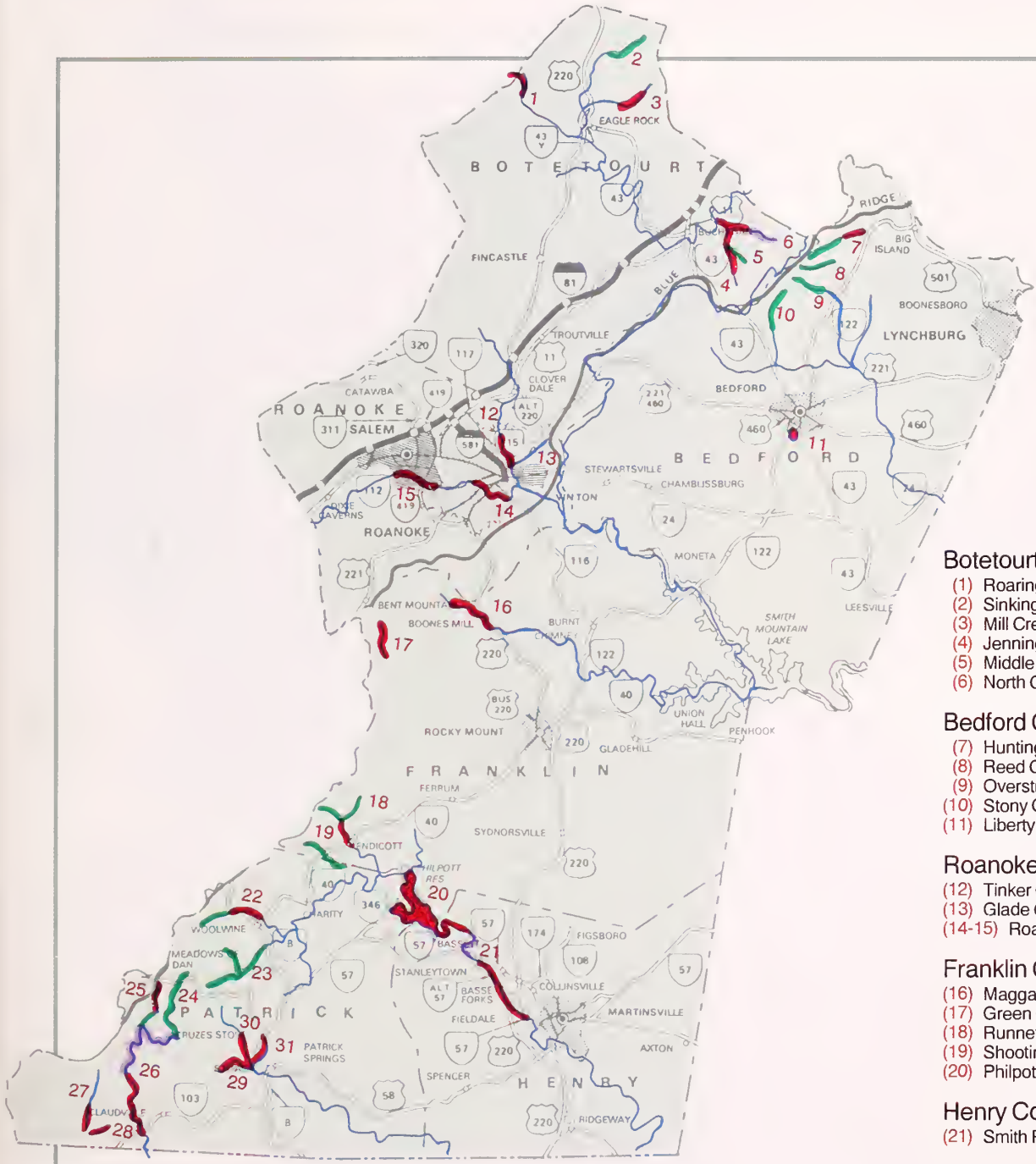
Highland County
(39) Bullpasture River
(40) Benson Run
(41) S. Fk. Potomac River
(42) Laurel Fork

Amherst County
(43) Pedlar River
(44) N. Fk. Buffalo River
(45) Little Piney River
(47) S. Fk. Piney River
(48) N. Fk. Piney River

Nelson County
(46) Shoe Creek
(49) S. Fk. Tye River
(50) N. Fk. Tye River
(51) Tye River

Rockbridge County
(53) S. Fk. Buffalo Creek
(54) Buffalo Creek
(55) Lexington Reservoir
(56) Mill Creek
(57) Guys Run
(58) Maury River
(59) South River
(60) Irish Creek
(61) Big Marys Creek

Area #3



Botetourt County
(1) Roaring Run
(2) Sinking Creek
(3) Mill Creek
(4) Jennings Creek
(5) Middle Creek
(6) North Creek

Bedford County
(7) Hunting Creek
(8) Reed Creek
(9) Overstreet Creek
(10) Stony Creek
(11) Liberty Lake

Roanoke County
(12) Tinker Creek
(13) Glade Creek
(14-15) Roanoke River

Franklin County
(16) Maggadee Creek
(17) Green Creek
(18) Runnett Bag Creek
(19) Shooting Creek
(20) Philpott Reservoir

Henry County
(21) Smith River

Patrick County
(22) Rock Castle Creek
(23) Smith River
(24) Dan River
(25) Round Meadow Creek
(26) Dan River
(27) Ararat River
(28) Clarks Creek
(29) S. Fk. Mayo River
(30) Poorhouse Creek
(31) N. Fk. Mayo River

Legend

wild trout streams
stocked trout waters
special regulation waters

Area #4

Craig County
(1) Potts Creek
(2) Barbours Creek
(3) Meadow Creek
(4) Sinking Creek

Giles County
(5) Big Stoney Creek
(6) Little Stoney Creek
(7) Johns Creek
(8) Mill Creek
(9) Dismal Creek

Montgomery County
(10) Craig Creek
(11) Poverty Creek
(12) Toms Creek
(13) S. Fk. Roanoke River

Floyd County
(14) Goose Creek
(15) Little River
(16) W. Fk. Little River
(17) Howells Creek

(18) Mira Fork
(19) Indian Creek
(20) Burkes Fork
(21) Laurel Fork

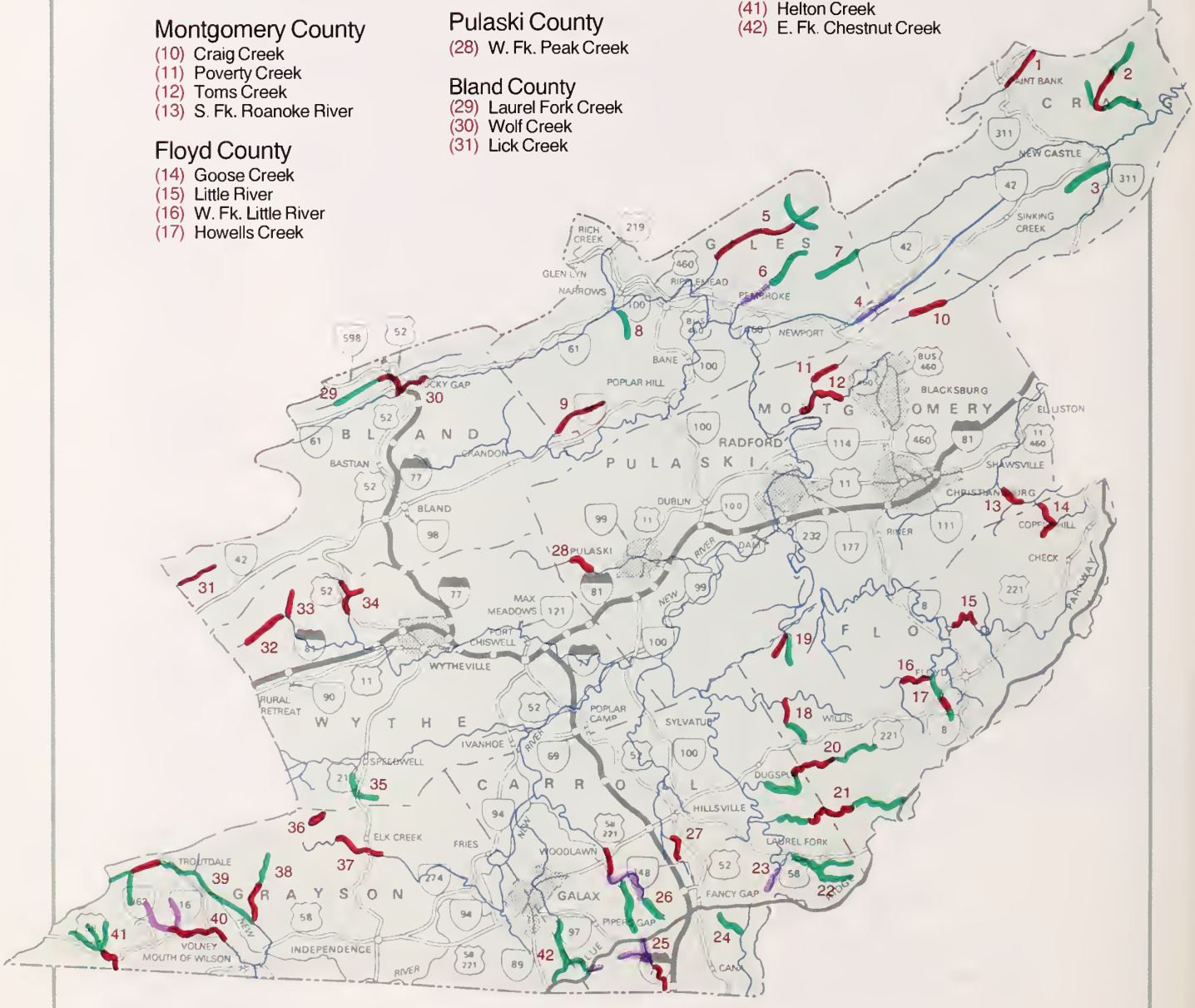
Carroll County
(22) Big Reed Island Creek
(23) Snake Creek
(24) Elk Spur Branch
(25) Stewarts Creek
(26) Crooked Creek
(27) Little Reed Island Creek

Pulaski County
(28) W. Fk. Peak Creek

Bland County
(29) Laurel Fork Creek
(30) Wolf Creek
(31) Lick Creek

Wythe County
(32) W. Fk. Reed Creek
(33) Guillon Fork
(34) Stoney Creek
(35) Dry Run

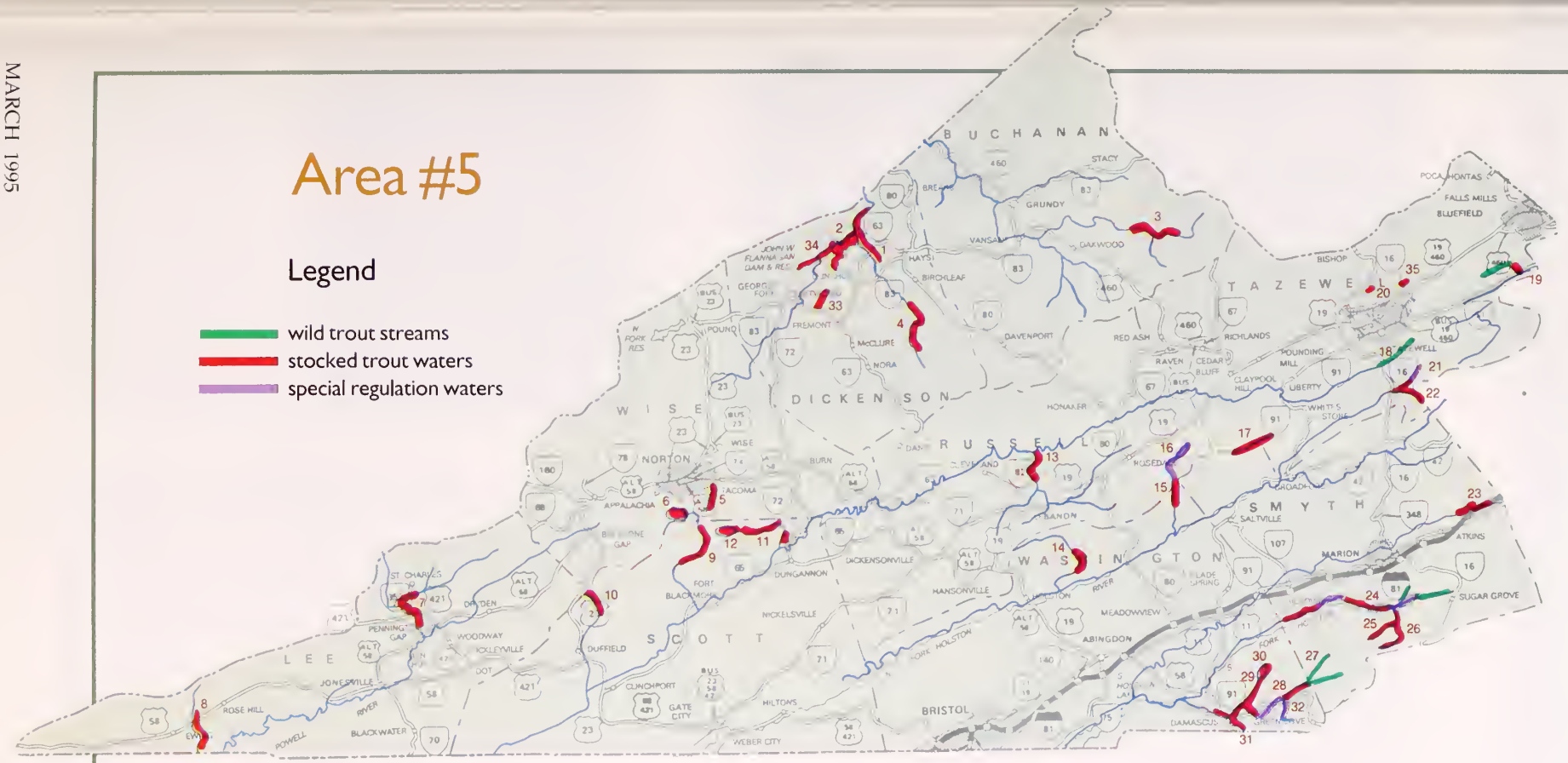
Grayson County
(36) Hales Lakes
(37) Elk Creek
(38) Middle Fox Creek
(39) Fox Creek
(40) Big Wilson Creek
(41) Helton Creek
(42) E. Fk. Chestnut Creek



Area #5

Legend

- wild trout streams
- stocked trout waters
- special regulation waters



Dickenson County
(1) Russell Fork
(2) Pound River
(4) Frying Pan Creek
(33) Cranesnest River
(34) Flanagan Reservoir

Buchanan County
(3) Dismal River

Wise County
(5) Clear Creek
(6) High Knob Lake

Lee County
(7) N. Fk. Powell River
(8) Martins Creek

Scott County
(9) Big Stoney Creek
(10) Stock Creek
(11) Little Stoney Creek
(12) Bark Camp Lake

Russell County
(13) Big Cedar Creek
(16) Laurel Bed Lake

Washington County
(14) Big Brumley Creek
(15) Big Tumbling Creek
(28) Whitetop Laurel
(29) Straight Branch
(30) Beartree Lake
(31) Tennessee Laurel
(32) Green Cove Creek

Tazewell County
(17) Little Tumbling Creek
(18) Maiden Spring Creek
(19) Cove Creek
(20) Lake Witten
(21) Roaring Fork
(22) Laurel Creek
(35) Lincolnshire Lake

Smyth County
(23) Middle Fk. Holston River
(24) S. Fk. Holston River
(25) Hurricane Creek
(26) Comer Creek
(27) Little Laurel Creek

VIRGINIA
Department of Game & Inland Fisheries

Journal

One-of-a-Kind Bird Dog Seminar— March 31, April 1, 2

Delmar Smith is back! The legendary bird dog trainer from Oklahoma will present a weekend seminar on bird dog training on March 31, April 1, 2 at Oakland Shooting preserve in Orange County. Sponsored by the Lahore Bird Dog Club, the seminar is the only one being offered in Virginia by Delmar this year, and is an intensive, hands-on course for gun dog owners, with participants working their own dogs under Delmar's supervision.

The course covers the basics of field training a bird dog, from yard training to bird work to field trialing. Participants will learn firsthand the techniques that have proven successful for the five-time winner of both the National Open and U.S. Open Brittany Championships. They will also be exposed to the gentle humor and wisdom of a trainer who is known to many as the "grandaddy of them all."

For more information on fees and registration, contact Lahore Bird Dog Club, c/o Dave Pomfret, Box 1265, Orange, VA 22960. Phone: 703/854-4540. ☐

For Kids Only

Want to catch the first trout of your life? Well, the Rapidan Chapter of Trout Unlimited (TU) and the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries once again invite all you kids 12 and under to join in the trout fishing fun Opening Day on the Rose River in Madison County.

We make sure that three-quarters of a mile of prime trout water is well-stocked for all 400 or more of you who will show up for this "kids only" event that was started 15 years ago by TU in an effort to give you a chance to catch a trout on Opening Day.

In addition, we make the stretch of the river "off limits" to adults for the whole day. Of course, you can order adults to help you bait your line and carry sandwiches down to the stream, but they won't be allowed to fish any of *your* trout water.

So, get your folks up early on Saturday, March 18, because the fun starts at 9:00 a.m. Plus, landowner Jimmy Graves of Graves Mountain Lodge has graciously opened up his land which borders the stream for the day, which allows for ample parking and plenty of access to the stream. You don't need a license and you don't need a penny to fish, but you do need to bring your own tackle and bait.

Tell your parents that the stream is located along Route 670 between Criglersville and Syria. If they have any questions, they can call George Huber of the Rapidan Chapter of TU at (703) 923-4278 for more information. Don't miss the fun! ☐

Special Honors

The Virginia Wildlife Federation recently honored three Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries employees at their annual conservation awards ceremony.

James F. McInteer, executive director of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries from 1978 to 1981 was honored with the Virginia Wildlife Federation Special Meritorious Service Award for his long and dedicated leadership in wildlife conservation. Following his retirement from VDGIF, McInteer took an active leadership role in the Virginia Wildlife Federation. He has never stopped working for the future of wildlife in this state.

Tom Gunter, a VDGIF fisheries biologist working in the Ashland office, was singled out for the very first Department of Game and Inland Fisheries Conservationist of the Year Award for his leadership role in Virginia's Shad Restoration Project. As the coordinator for the multi-agency and citizen group partnership effort to restore American shad in Virginia, Tom initiated an innovative and experimental approach to pro-

Lee Walker

James F. McInteer (right) receives Special Meritorious Service Award.

Lee Walker

Fisheries Biologist Tom Gunter (left) receives Department of Game and Inland Fisheries Conservationist of the Year Award for his work with the Shad Restoration Project.

Game Warden Edward W. Dempsey of Smyth County received the 1994 Game Warden of the Year Award.

duce two million shad fry for stocking in Virginia's depleted shad fishery. He used one of the nation's oldest hatcheries for this project, building upon his experience with a similar striped bass reproduction and stocking operation. Hard work, dedication, and a high degree of professionalism characterize Tom's efforts, and he is setting a high standard of excellence for the Department's annual Conservationist of the Year award.

Edward W. Dempsey of Smyth County received the 1994 Game Warden of the Year Award, singled out for this honor by his peers. In addition to his sterling qualities as game warden, he has worked tirelessly for the children in the outdoors, developing a water safety program, a kids' fishing day, and recruiting hunter education instructors for the schools in his county. He is busy now developing BB shooting teams to teach youngsters firearms safety, and a "learn to fish" program for handicapped children. His 20 years of service have been filled with educational achievements, service to the public and solid law enforcement performance, all of which has earned the respect and appreciation of his peers. □

Sporting Clubs Come To The Rescue

When VDGIF Game Warden Jay Dowdy of Alleghany County voiced a need for off-road transportation to cover problem areas regulated as foot travel only, the Alleghany-Covington Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of American and the Appalachian Long Spurs Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation came to the rescue.

Due to the lack of VDGIF funds to purchase an all-terrain vehicle for law enforcement use in the county, the Izaak Walton League conducted a pig roast, a primitive rendezvous and encampment with the help of the Mad Ann Rifles, a gun raffle, and a letter-writing campaign canvassing local civic organizations to raise the contributions needed to purchase the vehicle for the Department.

The letter-writing campaign netted contributions from the Millboro Ruritan Club and the Alleghany Gun Club. The Appalachian Long Spurs conducted a fund-raising banquet and auction to help raise the funds for their contribution toward the purchase.

Photo courtesy of the Virginian Review.

Sporting group representatives and VDGIF personnel gather around ATV donated to VDGIF. Kneeling from left are Pat Harrison, president of local chapter of National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF), and Mark Fridley of the Izaak Walton League of America (IWLA). Standing from left are: Tad Robertson, president of the local IWLA; Virgil Bartley, IWLA; VDGIF Captain Mike Clark; Leo Sizemore, IWLA; VDGIF Game Warden Jay Dowdy; George Noel, IWLA; Denny Pence of the Mad Ann Rifles; and Jimmy Sprouse of NWTF.

The ATV is not only a welcome addition to our law enforcement division, but it is an enduring symbol of the community support which makes our efforts at wildlife conservation effective and possible in the state. □

Letters

Lespedeza=Quail?

Seems to me that Irv Kenyon's article on quail and lespedeza is only partly correct when it claims that lack of this grass is the major cause for the loss of bobwhite.

The reason I write this is that we never hunted where lespedeza was farmed, yet could find five or six coveys in an afternoon. At one time there were quail here in Queens Lake, the residential community where I live.

Quail numbers everywhere in the South have gone *pfft*. Could this be cyclical as with ruffed grouse? Not that I don't like the lespedeza theory, but I feel it is only part of the larger, more complex situation.

Here, around Williamsburg, we've lost much quail acreage to residential development. But there's plenty left, and it isn't nearly as productive as in years gone by. In brief, one easy answer won't fly. Let's keep looking.

Art Cone
Williamsburg

Book Review

Natural Wonders of Virginia: A Guide to Parks, Preserves, & Wild Places, by Garvey and Deane Winegar. Softcover. 192 pps. $9.95 at bookstores or write Country Roads Press, P.O. Box 286, Castine, Maine 04421 phone: 1-800-729-9179 (add $3 shipping and handling if ordering by mail).

This is a grand book for the first-time visitor to Virginia and natives who just haven't gotten around to exploring the best of our state. It is a must-have for two reasons. First of all, Garvey is a splendid writer. It doesn't matter if he is putting together facts and figures on where to go and how to get there, Garvey delights you with his prose. Second, you can bet on the information in this guide. Both Garvey and Deane *are* Virginians, and with their natural, God-given pride in their state, they would take it as an insult to get a direction wrong or a description backwards to one of their favorite places. This is not to say that they might be forgiven for exaggerating somewhat when it comes to a place they *really* love, but that's just another trait of a loyal Virginian.

The guide is divided into geographical regions for the outdoor explorer: mountains, central region (piedmont), and tidewater, and it covers all the major parks and points of natural interest in each area. In addition, Garvey and Deane intersperse their descriptions of each park and natural area with anecdotes about wildlife or places, each delightful to read.

You will find addresses and phone numbers, best seasons to visit, accommodations available, and directions to each area in this compact little book.

Bon Voyage!

Safety

by Col. William Antozzi, Boating Safety Officer

Boating in Small Boats is Fun But Dangerous

Among young people, who comprise most of the boating population in Virginia, drowning is the second greatest cause of accidental death.

Last year, there were some fatalities and an understanding of how and why they occurred may help other boaters become more safety conscious.

Back in 1994 during January's cold weather, a 68-year-old boater on Sand Shoal Channel fell overboard. He was not wearing a personal flotation device (PFD), so he went totally under water. The involuntary gasp that results from hitting bone-chilling water can result in an intake of water. That gasp, plus hypothermia, can be fatal. In this case, it tragically was. If he had been wearing a PFD, however, he probably would have survived.

Another boater, a 13-year-old in a small boat on Pound Reservoir, while trying to untangle his fishing line, stood and fell overboard. It was early April, but after a cold winter, the water was still icy. The other two occupants of the boat attempted to rescue him, but failed. Each time an attempt was made to grasp him, he submerged. No swimming rescue was attempted. No alcohol was involved, but the boy was not wearing a PFD. In this case, if a PFD had been worn, the boater would have survived.

The James River was the site of an early May drowning. A father and son were the occupants of a small johnboat. Like most johnboats, it was unstable and the river current was swift around the vessel, and uneven weight distribution caused it to capsize, dumping both occupants into the river. The father was a poor swimmer. His son, who had average swimming ability, tried to save his 38-year-old father, but the swift current defeated his efforts. Neither was wearing a PFD. If PFDs had been worn, the incident would probably have had a happy ending. Instead, the day's fun had a tragic ending. No alcohol was involved.

Enjoy the fishing, but think safety when boating; photo by Soc Clay.

There was no alcohol involved either in loss of life at Hampton Roads in early June. Two men, age 41 and 64, were in an outboard propelled skiff which made a sharp turn, throwing one of them overboard. The skiff operator, instead of tossing a PFD to his buddy, jumped in to help, and they both drowned.

Alcohol was involved when a johnboat capsized at Buggs Island Lake in July. It was night and both boaters were thrown into the water. Darkness and the effects of alcohol defeated rescue attempts when one man tried to save the other. Same old story—no PFDs worn. The victim was 49.

Near the end of August, a 19-year-old boater was crabbing alone on Potomac Creek when he fell overboard and drowned. He was not wearing a PFD and his alcohol level was .91 There was a witness to the tragedy, but he was too far away to help.

In early September on the Dan River, an overloaded boat with four passengers was swamped. Three of them swam to shore but the victim, age 19, a poor swimmer, drowned. No PFDs were used.

At Camp Shenandoah Springs Pond in mid-September some young campers were playing with canoes when one capsized and a 15-year-old drowned. He was wearing a PFD, but it was unzipped and he fell out of it.

There are four lessons to be gleaned from the above narrative. Learn to swim, wear a PFD, save the alcohol for "terra firma" and don't overload small boats. □

Habitat

by Nancy Hugo

Tuliptree

In honor of a dying tree in Bedford, take a child into the woods today and teach him to recognize a tuliptree. No leaves, no flowers? No problem. Look for the tallest tree with the straightest trunk in the woods. Then look for upright, 3" candle-like structures at the end of each branch (they're what's left after the tree's winged seeds have twirled to the ground). Even in a hedgerow or scrub lot you can recognize a tuliptree sapling. Look for its tight, shiny brown bark and smooth, two-valved terminal buds that resemble ducks' bills. Scratch the bark to confirm your identification. It smells spicy, tastes bitter.

The Bedford tree you're honoring is the state's largest tree, the country's largest tuliptree. It's in serious decline and, while it may outlive us all, its glory days are past. I don't expect to see another tree like it in my lifetime—at least not one that can be found, as this one once could, growing at the end of a seldom-used path in ordinary woods. When measured for the American Forestry Association's champion tree program, it was 146' tall and 31" in circumference. That means it would take about six adults with arms outstretched to surround the tree with their arms.

Liriodendron tulipifera is the botanical name of this mammoth tree also known as tulip poplar or yellow poplar. Roughly translated, the Latin name means "tulip-bearing lily tree" and refers to the tree's flowers which, to me, look like neither tulips nor lilies, although the way the cup-like flowers sit on the folded back sepals does remind me a bit of a water lily on its pad. Not only are the flowers themselves unusual with their six light green petals and pale orange markings, but they are entirely unexpected on a forest tree. Inconspicuous flowers are the norm for forest trees, and these 2" flowers are as showy as ornamentals.

Nancy Hugo

The Bedford tulip poplar was a sight to behold as the state's largest tree in the mid-80's when this photo was taken. It has since been in a state of aging decline.

The size of the flowers seems less odd when you realize the tuliptree belongs to a family of trees with big flowers—the Magnolias. Strangely enough, this tree so often referred to as a tulip poplar is not a poplar at all. Two reasons are suggested for why the tuliptree is referred to as a poplar: its long-stalked, fluttering leaves resemble those of a true poplar, and its wood is soft like a poplar's. Although the tuliptree is technically a hardwood, its wood is softer than all but two softwoods in North America.

Other common names for this native tree derive from properties of its wood. It's called yellow poplar because its heartwood is yellowish, whitewood because its sapwood is white. Canoewood is another of the tree's common names. Because the wood is light and easy to work and because tuliptrees have notably straight trunks that sometimes don't branch until 50-80' off the ground, their trunks were used for making dugout canoes. Legend has it that Daniel Boone made his exit from Kentucky in a 60' tuliptree canoe loaded with his family and all his worldly belongings.

The tuliptree's leaves and fruit are distinctive, too. The tuliptree leaf has pointed lobes at the sides like maple leaf, but where the maple leaf would come to a point at the end, the tuliptree's leaf margin takes a plunge and dips into a saddle shape. And tuliptree leaves are big. While a normal tuliptree leaf may be about 6" x 6", the one in front of me right now, which I picked from a sapling in July, is 9"x 9". In the fall, these leaves turn a beautiful pale yellow or yellow-gold. Tuliptree fruits also ripen in the fall. These upright, cone-like structures are made up of flat, overlapping blades with enlarged ends where the seeds are housed. These seeds are eaten by squirrels and birds, particularly cardinals and purple finches, and because they persist into the winter, they are of particular value. Honeybees and hummingbirds relish the nectar of tuliptree flowers, and the flowers depend on the bees for cross-pollination.

After you've taught a child to recognize all these tuliptree features, take him to see a giant one. Sadly, I think I'd skip the diminished Bedford tulip poplar even though it has a park to honor it now. Go instead to Westover plantation on the James River where centenarian tuliptrees flank the house. There you'll find a tree about 116' tall and 23' in circumference. Although it will take only four of you to surround it with your arms, anyone with his arms hugging this trunk will be impressed. □

Recipes

By Joan Cone

Trout For Dinner

All three species of trout, brook, brown, and rainbow, are delicious. And because the heads are small, you'll have more good eating per pound than with most other species.

Here is an easy but elegant recipe you can use for a tasty trout meal. Get out your fly rod and head for the mountains!

MENU

Asparagus Soup
Trout Amandine
Cornbread
Green Vegetable Trio
Banana Split Dessert

Asparagus Soup

1 tablespoon butter or margarine
1 small onion, chopped
1 tablespoon flour
2 cans (14 ½ ounces each) low sodium chicken broth
1 pound asparagus, tough ends discarded, cut into l-inch pieces
½ teaspoon dried basil
Sour cream, optional

Melt 1 tablespoon butter in heavy medium saucepan over medium heat. Add chopped onion and cook until tender, stirring occasionally. Add flour and stir. Gradually mix in canned chicken broth. Bring mixture to boil. Add asparagus pieces and basil and simmer until asparagus is very tender, about 25 minutes. Cool slightly. Drain asparagus, reserving cooking liquid. Puree asparagus in food processor. With machine running, gradually add ½ cup cooking liquid and puree asparagus until smooth. Gradually blend in remaining cooking liquid. Return mixture to saucepan. Season with salt and freshly ground pepper. Bring soup to simmer. Ladle into bowls and top with dollop of sour cream, if desired. Serves 4.

Trout Amandine

6 whole drawn trout (8 ounces each)
½ cup flour
Salt and pepper
4 tablespoons olive oil
Amandine Sauce

Wipe fish dry with paper towels. Mix flour with salt and pepper and roll fish in flour mixture. In a large frying pan or electric skillet, heat oil. Place fish in pan and cook slowly until brown on one side. Turn carefully with a spatula and brown on other side. Fish are done when meat flakes easily when tested with a fork. Allow 1 fish per person.

Amandine Sauce

½ cup butter or margarine
½ cup slivered almonds
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
2 tablespoons white table wine
Salt and pepper to taste

Melt butter in a small skillet. Add almonds and sauté over low heat until golden color. Add remaining ingredients and shake pan over heat for 2 minutes. Pour sauce over cooked trout and serve.

Cornbread

1 ¼ cups biscuit baking mix
¾ cup cornmeal
2 tablespoons sugar
½ teaspoon salt
1 egg
2 tablespoons shortening
⅔ cup milk

Preheat oven to 400° Grease round pan, 9 x 1½-inches or square pan, 8 x 8 x 2-inches. Mix all ingredients and beat vigorously for 30 seconds. Spread batter in pan. Bake until golden brown, 20 to 25 minutes. Makes 9 to 12 servings.

Green Vegetable Trio

1 pound broccoli, cut into florets with stems peeled and sliced ¼-inch thick
1 pound fresh green beans, trimmed
½ pound snow peas, trimmed and strings removed
6 tablespoons butter or margarine
1½ tablespoons of mixed chopped parsley, thyme and rosemary

Boil broccoli and green beans for 3 minutes and run under cold water. Blanche snow peas for 20 seconds. Melt butter and add herbs, mixing well. Pour hot butter mixture over vegetables and heat quickly on stove or in the microwave. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

Banana Split Dessert

1 ½ cups graham cracker crumbs
½ cup melted butter or margarine
2 cups confectioners powdered sugar
½ cup butter or margarine, softened
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla
3 or 4 bananas, sliced
1 can (1 pound, 4 ounces) crushed pineapple, drained well
1 carton (12 ounces) whipped topping
½ cup crushed nuts
Maraschino cherries

Mix crumbs and ½ cup melted butter. Spread on bottom of a 9 x 13-inch pan or dish. Beat confectioners sugar, ½ cup softened butter, eggs and vanilla for 10 minutes. Spread over crumbs. Arrange bananas over mixture. Sprinkle pineapple on top of bananas. Cover with whipped topping and sprinkle nuts on top. Decorate with cherries and chill well before serving. Makes 12 to 16 servings.

Preserving in bronze what we treasure in the wild

A Special Wildlife Series by Turner Sculpture

Northern flying squirrel (height: 7 inches) by David Turner.

Going, Going.....(Almost) Gone

Less than 50 of the 200 piping plovers and 200 northern flying squirrels sculpted by David Turner of Turner Sculpture to support Virginia's Nongame and Endangered Species Program are left for sale! Soon, it will be too late to purchase one of these exquisite bronze sculptures of two of Virginia's rarest animals.

David Turner has captured the spirit of the delicate, yet spritely piping plover and her chicks in bronze, a fitting reminder of the fact that one-quarter of the East Coast piping plover population nests on the beaches of Virginia's barrier islands. Conversely, the model for his charming northern flying squirrel hails from only three locations high in Virginia's mountains.

You can help Virginia's Nongame and Endangered Species Program by purchasing these works of art. The money raised from the sale of these sculptures will provide the program responsible for the management and protection of all the Commonwealth's rare wildlife with over 1/10th of its operating budget.

Each sculpture has a purchase price of $325. Turner Sculpture will receive $175 to cover their production costs, while the remaining $150 will be sent to the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries as your contribution to Virginia's Nongame and Endangered Species Program. A tax advisor should be consulted regarding the personal tax deductibility of your contribution. Each piece sold will include a certificate of origin and a letter confirming your contribution to the future of Virginia's wildlife.

You may order either the piping plover or the Northern flying squirrel by sending a $325 check for each signed and numbered sculpture to: Turner Sculpture, Box 128, Onley, Va 23418. For credit card orders, call: 804/787-2818.

And don't forget to give a little bit back to Virginia's wildlife by checking off a contribution to Virginia's Nongame and Endangered Species Program on your state income tax form this year. The program exists because of contributions like yours, and receives no state tax dollars.

Photo of piping plover approximates actual size.

TURNER SCULPTURE

Nongame and Endangered WILDLIFE·PROGRAM
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND INLAND FISHERIES